

# Vermont HUD Consolidated Plan

2023 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

JULY 1, 2023

# Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
AP-05 Executive Summary - 24 CFR 91.200(c), 91.220(b) .....	3
PR-05 Lead & Responsible Agencies - 91.300(b) .....	8
AP-10 Consultation - 91.110, 91.300(b); 91.315(l) .....	9
AP-12 Participation - 91.115, 91.300(c) .....	19
Expected Resources .....	21
AP-15 Expected Resources – 91.320(c)(1,2) .....	21
Annual Goals and Objectives .....	26
AP-20 Annual Goals and Objectives – 91.320(c)(3)&(e) .....	26
AP-25 Allocation Priorities – 91.320(d).....	30
AP-30 Methods of Distribution – 91.320(d)&(k).....	32
AP-35 Projects – (Optional).....	56
AP-40 Section 108 Loan Guarantee – 91.320(k)(1)(ii) .....	57
AP-45 Community Revitalization Strategies – 91.320(k)(1)(ii) .....	58
AP-50 Geographic Distribution – 91.320(f).....	59
Affordable Housing .....	60
AP-55 Affordable Housing – 24 CFR 91.320(g) .....	60
AP-60 Public Housing - 24 CFR 91.320(j).....	61
AP-65 Homeless and Other Special Needs Activities – 91.320(h) .....	63
AP-75 Barriers to affordable housing – 91.320(i) .....	67
AP-85 Other Actions – 91.320(j) .....	70
Program Specific Requirements.....	74
AP-90 Program Specific Requirements – 91.320(k)(1,2,3).....	75

# Executive Summary

## AP-05 Executive Summary - 24 CFR 91.200(c), 91.220(b)

### 1. Introduction

The State of Vermont's 2023 Annual Action Plan (AAP) will guide the use of funding received through programs administered under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. These include the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), Emergency Solutions Grant Program (ESG) and Housing Trust Fund (HTF). The CDBG is administered by the Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) in the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) of the Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD). The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) administers HOME and HTF. The ESG is administered by the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) of the Department for Children and Families of the Agency of Human Services.

This AAP builds upon the State's five-year 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan which identified the state's housing and community development priorities based on an extensive needs assessment, market analysis, and citizen and stakeholder input. The Strategic Plan established goals for meeting these priority needs that reflect anticipated resources and past performance. Each goal is accompanied by an estimate of resources that will be used to meet it as well as outcome indicators that will be used to evaluate the State's performance.

For 2022, the State increased the goal for the number of housing units for the homeless from 15 units to 25 units annually. In this 2023 AAP, the Office of Economic Opportunity reduced the goal for rapid re-housing and rental assistance using ESP funding from 400 households to 250. ESG funds will be used primarily for emergency shelters and State funds that are better suited and more flexible will be used for repaid re-housing and rental assistance going forward.

For this 2023 AAP, the DHCD sought input on potential increases to the CDBG set aside for Scattered Site Homeownership RLFs (SS-RLF), Access Modification grant set-aside and limits, and increasing the allocation percentage for CDBG funds under the Strengthen communities priority. VCDP also considered adding a target / set-aside for Recovery Housing. After consulting with the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board, DHCD decided not to change the allocation percentage under the Strong Communities priority but will increase the set aside for SS-RLF and AM grants.

As per HUD's goals, the State will use CDBG, HOME, HTF and ESG to provide decent, affordable housing, suitable living environments, and expand economic opportunities for low and moderate-income Vermonters. These goals will also be applied to the CDBG-RHP program to promote facilities and services that stabilize living environments and enhance quality of life for families and individuals recovering from addiction.

Each program will be administered according to the State’s three guiding principles: The first is achieving the perpetual affordability of housing resources and investments. The second principle is promoting development in State designated downtowns, village centers, neighborhood development areas and other areas that are consistent with the state’s historic settlement pattern and “Smart Growth” – including designated ‘new town centers’ and ‘growth centers’. The third principle is to link our homeless assistance activities with permanent housing through systems, practices and initiatives that are informed by data and proven approaches. Under all circumstances, the State is committed, and obligated, to ensuring that any project funded, and those entities responsible for administering such funds must affirmatively further fair housing and work towards overcoming illegal housing discrimination and broadening housing options for all people.

## **2. Summarize the objectives and outcomes identified in the Plan**

This could be a restatement of items or a table listed elsewhere in the plan or a reference to another location. It may also contain any essential items from the housing and homeless needs assessment, the housing market analysis or the strategic plan.

The 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan established four goals to address the identified housing and community development priorities.

1. Increase the supply and quality of affordable housing.
2. Decrease the number of people experiencing homelessness.
3. Create and retain jobs.
4. Strengthen communities and improve the quality of life of Vermonters.

Strategies for meeting these goals and the desired outcomes are detailed in the Strategic Plan section. The State will use CDBG, CDBG-RHP, HOME, HTF and ESG funds for housing, homelessness, job creation and retention, and community strengthening activities. Goal outcomes over the next year based on estimated funding include:

Housing: 140 rental units being constructed or rehabilitated, 102 homeowner units being developed and rehabilitated and 25 housing units for the homeless added.

Homelessness: 250 households assisted with rental and rapid rehousing assistance and 3,000 persons provided with emergency shelter.

Jobs: 30 jobs being created or retained, and 2 businesses being assisted.

Communities: 4,290 persons served by improved public facilities or infrastructure, 350 persons assisted by public services, 1 acres of brownfields being remediated, and two blighted buildings being demolished.

### **3. Evaluation of past performance**

This is an evaluation of past performance that helped lead the grantee to choose its goals or projects.

The State's annual housing goals identified in the 2022 Annual Action Plan were to assist 140 units of affordable rental housing and 102 units of affordable home owner units, and to add 25 units of housing for the homeless.

In the last full program year, from July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022, CDBG assisted a total of 234 housing units in 10 communities, of which included 6 enhancements to prior affordable housing projects to move them forward. CDBG also funded 4 awards and 1 enhancement to public facility/service grants serving 11,328 people, and 6 awards and 2 enhancements to planning grants.

In the last full program year, from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022, a total of six (6) projects were completed that utilized HOME program funding, creating 121 units of affordable housing with 28 HOME-designated units. In addition, \$150,000 in HOME CHDO Operating funds was awarded to 3 certified Community Housing Development Organizations.

During the same program year, seven (7) projects were completed that included Housing Trust Fund money. This project resulted in the rehabilitation of 157 affordable housing units with 31 HTF-designated units serving extremely low income households.

In the last full program year, from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022, ESG funding and State matched funding provided 162,569 shelter bed-nights to 2,648 homeless persons; 2,128 were adults and 520 were children under the age of 18.

In State fiscal year 2022, the ESG program, including state matched funding, also provided housing stability for 290 literally homeless households through rapid rehousing tenant-based rental assistance.

### **4. Summary of Citizen Participation Process and consultation process**

Summary from citizen participation section of plan.

In developing this Plan, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB), and the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) followed the State's Citizen Participation Plan, consulted with a broad range of local, regional and State organizations, including units of local government, both Continua of Care and the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board, and conducted a public hearing to gather input on the needs of residents and communities in the areas of housing, economic development, public facilities, and services, review past performance, and ideas for programs or activities before developing this plan.

The first public hearing was held on February 10, 2023, to get input before developing the draft plan.

A second public hearing was held on April 3, 2023, to hear comments on the draft, followed by a thirty day written comment period.

## **5. Summary of public comments**

This could be a brief narrative summary or reference an attached document from the Citizen Participation section of the Con Plan.

Testimony from the public hearing is summarized in notes published on the DHCD's website.

No one from the public attended the February 10, 2023 hearing in person or virtual / by telephone. A representative of the NeighborWorks Alliance of Vermont attended the April 3, 2023 hearing and testified in favor of DHCD's proposal to increase the Scattered Site (SS) Homeownership RLF set-aside from 25% to 35%.

## **6. Summary of comments or views not accepted and the reasons for not accepting them**

DHCD received one written comment in support of the proposed increase to the SS Homeownership set-aside and four written comments related to farm worker housing and met with the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board to discuss the comments and get their feedback on the programmatic changes proposed by the VCDP.

The written comment and feedback from the Advisory Board on the Scattered Site Homeownership RLF are summarized below along with DHCD's response:

- The written comment noted the importance of the CDBG funded home repair loan program, operated out of the five homeownership centers, and requested ongoing and increased support (and a specific set-aside)
- Advisory Board members expressed concern that taking additional funding to target the HOC's takes away from the ability to fund housing for homeless people
- Advisory Board members suggested making the additional 10% increase in the CDBG allocation to SS RLF competitively awarded instead of increasing the set-aside
- Advisory Board members expressed concerns with the scope of the changes being proposed as part of the Annual Action Plan – specifically farm worker housing and increased set asides for SS-RLF's and AM grants – commenting that a one-year plan should have fewer changes and conducting greater public outreach on these issues before developing the next five year plan

Response:

- The VCDP, which administers the State CDBG program, recognizes the ongoing need for home repair program funds

- VCDP will continue to support programs like the Green Mountain Home Repair, Northeast Kingdom Home Repair, Champlain Housing Loan Fund, and HOME Repair programs, which allow LMI homeowners to access grants and loans for essential home repairs. VCDP will also consider the ongoing need for home repair in future allocation determinations.
- Between 2020 and 2022, VCDP's scattered site grant program that supports the home repair programs completed 301 essential home repairs (290 single family homes and 11 rental units) for LMI households across Vermont with an additional 54 homes in various stages of construction and another 43 households in the application phase of the program.
- The current 25% Set Aside recently capped the overall available funding at \$1.82 million for the FY22 VCDP Program Year, however total requested amount from the NeighborWorks® Alliance of Vermont Homeownership Centers (HOC) was \$2.3 million to fully fund the home repair program.

The comments on farm worker housing raised similar concerns which are summarized below along with DHCD's responses.

- Requested support of the Land Access and Opportunity board to improve housing on farms
- Requested support for farmworker housing repair grant program (run by UVM and Champlain housing trust)
- Requested increased and ongoing support for farmworker housing generally

Response:

- VCDP recognizes the ongoing need for affordable, safe, and accessible farmworker housing as a key aspect to support Vermont's farming community.
- The annual action plan acknowledges the ongoing need for farmworker housing and references the UVM and Champlain Housing Trust Program as part of the solution.
- The Plan states that the Department of Housing and Community Development will continue to invest in affordable housing in communities with high levels of agricultural activity to ensure farm workers' needs are addressed.
- (VCDP staff also noted that farm worker housing would be an eligible use of SS-RLF funds provided that the farmworker can show LMI eligibility. It could count as a rental unit repair.)

## PR-05 Lead & Responsible Agencies - 91.300(b)

### 1. Agency/entity responsible for preparing/administering the Consolidated Plan

The following are the agencies/entities responsible for preparing the Consolidated Plan and those responsible for administration of each grant program and funding source.

Agency Role	Name	Department/Agency
CDBG Administrator	VERMONT	Vermont Community Development Program, DHCD/ACCD
HOME Administrator	VERMONT	Vermont Housing and Conservation Board
ESG Administrator	VERMONT	Office of Economic Opportunity, DCF/AHS
	VERMONT	Vermont Housing and Conservation Board

Table 1 – Responsible Agencies

#### Narrative

The DHCD is designated as the agency responsible for developing the Consolidated Plan and administering the CDBG Program. The mission of the department is to improve the lives of Vermonters and further the sustainable development of Vermont communities.

By State statute, the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) has been designated as the agency responsible for administering HOME funds and the Housing Trust Fund. Therefore, the State's HOME program will be administered by VHCB pursuant to a contract with the Department. Additionally, HTF is to be administered by VHCB in accordance with the "Vermont HTF Allocation Plan".

The OEO, as part of Agency of Human Services (AHS), administers the ESG program. The mission of AHS is, "To improve the health and well-being of Vermonters today and tomorrow and to protect those who are unable to protect themselves." The highest priority for AHS housing efforts is to end homelessness in Vermont. The AHS Office of Economic Opportunity works in partnership with the private sector, community-based organizations, and others to increase the self-sufficiency of Vermonters, strengthen Vermont communities, and eliminate the causes and symptoms of poverty.

#### Consolidated Plan Public Contact Information

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## **AP-10 Consultation - 91.110, 91.300(b); 91.315(l)**

### **1. Introduction**

In developing the State's 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan, DHCD consulted with a multitude of organizations, including municipal governments, representatives on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board, many local and regional organizations, and stakeholders in housing and homeless service programs.

In preparing this 2023 Annual Action Plan update, DHCD, through the Advisory Board and other partner organizations, distributed information about the consolidated planning process and has sought to engage involvement from a wide constituency of people, including participation from low and moderate-income people, people living in slum and blighted areas and in areas where CDBG, HOME, HTF and ESG funds are used.

To consult specifically on ESG, the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) reaches out to the Continuums of Care (CoC), nonprofit homeless shelter and service providers, as well as other State agency and nonprofit partners where homeless policy and service populations overlap.

#### **Provide a concise summary of the state's activities to enhance coordination between public and assisted housing providers and private and governmental health, mental health and service agencies**

In the last several years, affordable housing providers and representatives of health, mental health, environmental, labor, and service agencies have substantially strengthened their networking and coordination activities. The State, through DHCD and OEO, has led, actively encouraged, and participated in these efforts, and will continue to do so.

DHCD actively participates in the state's two continuum of care organizations and coordinates economic development activities with the Department of Economic Development (also of ACCD), regional development corporations, local and state chambers of commerce and other State agencies.

#### **Describe coordination with the Continuum of Care and efforts to address the needs of homeless persons (particularly chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans, and unaccompanied youth) and persons at risk of homelessness**

The State of Vermont has two Continua of Care, Chittenden County and "Balance of State". The OEO and DHCD both participate in regular meetings of these groups through the Chittenden Homelessness Alliance and the Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness which are each a coalition of homeless service providers, mental health care providers, Veterans Affairs, service providers addressing the needs of homeless and runaway youth, and other organizations with missions to address the needs of those who

are experiencing homelessness or precariously housed. These groups meet monthly to discuss ongoing efforts and needs and coordinate resources and advocacy efforts.

Over the pandemic, homeless housing and coordination has occurred through both short-high priority public health response workgroups such as the General Assistance Emergency Housing Workgroup with both public and private partners, representation in the State Emergency Operations Center and its corresponding staff. As we emerge from the pandemic and enter a period of recovery, we are planning for the next iteration of the Vermont Council on Homelessness, which has historically been hosted and chaired by the Agency of Human Services, OEO's parent Agency.

Vermont's most recent five-year plan (2018-2022) endorsed three key strategies to prevent and end homelessness.

1. **Housing Supply, Affordability, Access:** Increase the number of homes affordable to Vermonters with extremely low-income (less than 30% of area median income), especially those who are homeless.
2. **Coordination of Programming:** Align programs serving Vermonters who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, under the clear objective of Housing Stability. Emphasize meeting the housing needs of the Person, not merely the program.
3. **Supportive Services:** Expand the capacity of programs to provide individualized supportive services once formerly homeless families and individuals move into permanent housing.

Vermont has worked to restructure its homeless assistance funding to better align with state and federal goals to reduce the number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness, shorten the length of time persons are homeless, and to reduce the number of people returning to homelessness.

Vermont was a recipient of HUD's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program in Round 2 and was able to pilot various innovative programs to address and prevent homelessness amongst youth and young adults. These programs are now funded through the annual Continuum of Care funding.

**Describe consultation with the Continuum(s) of Care that serves the State in determining how to allocate ESG funds, develop performance standards for and evaluate outcomes of projects and activities assisted by ESG funds, and develop funding, policies and procedures for the operation and administration of HMIS**

Vermont has two HUD Continuums of Care (CoC), the Chittenden County CoC (known as the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance) and the Balance of State CoC (known as the Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness). The Balance of State CoC is a coalition of 11 local or regional CoCs.

The State Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) coordinates with partners in AHS, the CoCs, and external stakeholders to ensure that the Emergency Solutions Grant program is part of an integrated,

statewide strategy to ending homelessness and improving housing and stability outcomes for families and individuals. CoCs have provided input into how Vermont is determining the allocation of funds, the development of performance and evaluation outcomes, and the development of policies and procedures for the administration of HMIS. This input and consultation has been provided through 2 primary methods:

- Formal presentations and discussion at CoC Meetings, at least annually
- Online survey (currently in progress)

OEO and AHS are active participants in the governance of each CoC. OEO also serves on and/or chairs various committees in each, including HMIS, Coordinated Entry and other ad hoc workgroups.

## **2. Agencies, groups, organizations and others who participated in the process and consultations**

**Table 2 – Agencies, groups, organizations who participated**

1	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Vermont Housing And Conservation Board
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Housing Other government - State Grantee Department
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Housing Need Assessment Lead-based Paint Strategy
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is represented on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board.
2	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Vermont Legal Aid
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Services-Elderly Persons Services-Persons with Disabilities Service-Fair Housing Legal service
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Housing Need Assessment Anti-poverty Strategy
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is represented on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board.
3	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Vermont State Housing Authority
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Housing PHA Other government - State
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Housing Need Assessment Public Housing Needs
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is represented on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board.

4	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Regional organization
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Economic Development
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is represented on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board.
5	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Homeless Prevention Center
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Services-homeless
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children Homelessness Needs - Veterans Homelessness Needs - Unaccompanied youth Homelessness Strategy
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is represented on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board.
6	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Champlain Housing Trust
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Housing Services - Housing Services-homeless Regional organization
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Annual Action Plan
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is represented on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board.

7	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	West Rutland
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Other government - Local Civic Leaders
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Market Analysis Economic Development
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is represented on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board.
8	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Services - Housing Services-homeless
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children Homelessness Needs - Veterans Homelessness Needs - Unaccompanied youth Homelessness Strategy
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is represented on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board.
9	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Vermont Interfaith Action
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Faith-based
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Anti-poverty Strategy
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is represented on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board.

10	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Bennington County Regional Commission
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Regional organization Planning organization
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Housing Need Assessment Market Analysis Economic Development
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is represented on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board.
11	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Services - Housing Service-Fair Housing Regional organization Tenants' rights
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Annual Action Plan
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is represented on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board.
12	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Vermont Center for Independent Living
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Services - Housing Services-Persons with Disabilities
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Non-Homeless Special Needs
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is represented on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board.

13	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Community Capital of Vermont
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Small business and microenterprise lender Community Development Financial Institution
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Economic Development
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is represented on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board.
14	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Vermont Economic Development Authority
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Other government - State Business Leaders Civic Leaders
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Economic Development
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is represented on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board.
15	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Cathedral Square Corporation (CHDO)
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Housing Services-Elderly Persons
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Housing Need Assessment
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is represented on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board.
16	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Vermont Housing Finance Agency
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Housing Other government - State
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Housing Need Assessment Market Analysis



	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is represented on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board.
17	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Montpelier Housing Authority
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	PHA
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Public Housing Needs
	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is represented on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board.
18	<b>Agency/Group/Organization</b>	Vermont Agency of Human Services
	<b>Agency/Group/Organization Type</b>	Services - Housing Services-Children Services-Elderly Persons Services-Persons with Disabilities Services-homeless Services-Health Health Agency Grantee Department
	<b>What section of the Plan was addressed by Consultation?</b>	Homeless Needs - Chronically homeless Homeless Needs - Families with children Homelessness Needs - Veterans Homelessness Needs - Unaccompanied youth Homelessness Strategy Non-Homeless Special Needs Anti-poverty Strategy

	<b>Briefly describe how the Agency/Group/Organization was consulted. What are the anticipated outcomes of the consultation or areas for improved coordination?</b>	This organization is represented on the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board.
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**Identify any Agency Types not consulted and provide rationale for not consulting**

No agencies were intentionally left out of consulting efforts for this Plan.

**Other local/regional/state/federal planning efforts considered when preparing the Plan**

Name of Plan	Lead Organization	How do the goals of your Strategic Plan overlap with the goals of each plan?
Continuum of Care	Chittenden CoC and Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness (Balance of State CoC)	The existing planning document for both Continuums of Care is their respective responses to the annual HUD CoC notice of funding availability (NOFA). Their responses and the Strategic Plan both seek to decrease the number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

**Table 3 - Other local / regional / federal planning efforts**

**Narrative**

Historically, OEO has utilized strategies such as surveys to Vermonters with lived experiences to seek input on ESG. For this Annual Action Plan OEO reached out specifically to the Continua of Care (CoC), nonprofit homeless shelter and service providers, as well as other State agency and nonprofit partners where homeless policy and service populations overlap. Vermonters with lived experience of homelessness are represented on Vermont’s two HUD Continuums of Care. All subrecipients are also required to maximize people with lived experiences in the planning and delivery of services. OEO values participation of Vermonters with lived experience at the project, community (CoCs), and state level. OEO will continue to explore opportunities for meaningful participation of those with direct experience in planning program policy and administration.

## **AP-12 Participation - 91.115, 91.300(c)**

### **1. Summary of citizen participation process/Efforts made to broaden citizen participation Summarize citizen participation process and how it impacted goal-setting**

This AAP was built on the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan which was developed with extensive public outreach through community meetings and an online survey and developed with public input as per the State of Vermont Citizen Participation Plan adopted in April 2005 with input from the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board. The State is also looking into ways to increase engagement with disadvantaged and minority communities through alternate methods such as social media and will continue these efforts in the years to come.

The Consolidated Plan Advisory Board was formed to guide the development and priorities of the State's Consolidated Plan. The Advisory Board encompasses a broad range of constituents including representation from organizations that are faith-based, serve the homeless and persons with disabilities, seniors, public housing tenants, economic development, and other non-housing community development needs.

Advisory Board members are encouraged to distribute information about the consolidated planning process to their constituents and people they serve. Members of the Board assist in stimulating involvement from a wide constituency of people, especially participation from low- and moderate-income people, people living in slum and blighted areas, and in areas where CDBG, HOME, HTF and ESG funds are used.

Two public hearings were legally warned and publicized two weeks in advance in all major newspapers across the state and by postings, email, and online. The first hearing was conducted on February 10, 2023, before development of the plan, to obtain citizens' views about the needs and interests of the public in the areas of housing, public services, community development and economic development, development of proposed grant activities, and to review past performance related to the HUD Consolidated Plan. A second hearing is scheduled on April 3, 2023 to hear comments on this draft plan which will be followed by a 30-day written comment period.

**Citizen Participation Outreach**

Sort Order	Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Response / attendance	Summary of comments received	Summary of comments not accepted and reasons	URL (If applicable)
1	Public Hearing	Non-targeted / broad community	No one from the public attended in person or virtual / telephone.	N/A	N/A	<a href="https://accd.vermont.gov/event/vermont-hud-consolidated-plan-public-hearing">https://accd.vermont.gov/event/vermont-hud-consolidated-plan-public-hearing</a>
2	Public Hearing	Non-targeted / broad community	A representative of Vermont’s homeownership centers testified in favor of the proposed increase of the SS-RLF set-aside to 35%.	A representative of Vermont’s homeownership centers testified in favor of the proposed increase of the SS-RLF set-aside to 35%.	N/A - the only testimony was in favor of a change being proposed by DHCD.	<a href="https://accd.vermont.gov/event/public-hearing-draft-hud-consolidated-plan">https://accd.vermont.gov/event/public-hearing-draft-hud-consolidated-plan</a>

**Table 4 – Citizen Participation Outreach**

## Expected Resources

### AP-15 Expected Resources – 91.320(c)(1,2)

#### Introduction

Vermont's allocations for 2023 are about \$7.33 million in CDBG funds to be used for housing, economic development, public facilities and services, \$3.03 million in HOME funds to be used for housing, and \$697,788 in ESG funds to be used for emergency shelter and rapid rehousing for persons experiencing homelessness. The VCDP estimates an additional \$200,000 in CDBG program income.

Vermont's allocation from the National Housing Trust Fund for 2023 is about \$3.066 million. This resource will be used according to Vermont's HTF allocation plan, to meet the housing needs of extremely low-income households.

CDBG, HOME and ESG will be used strategically to address priority needs and leverage other federal, State, and local resources. These include federal low-income housing tax credits. The State's LIHTC program is administered by the Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA) in accordance with Vermont's Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP). The QAP closely reflects the priorities, goals and strategies of the Consolidated Plan. A significant source for non-housing community development is equity generated by New Market Tax Credits which are utilized by Evernorth Rural Ventures, a qualified community development enterprise. Both VHFA and Evernorth sit on the Vermont Housing Council and the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board ensuring close coordination. Additional resources that may be leveraged to support the goals of the Consolidated Plan include Section 8, McKinney-Vento, Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust and matching funds.

**Anticipated Resources**

Program	Source of Funds	Uses of Funds	Expected Amount Available Year 1				Expected Amount Available Remainder of ConPlan \$	Narrative Description
			Annual Allocation: \$	Program Income: \$	Prior Year Resources: \$	Total: \$		
CDBG	public - federal	Acquisition Admin and Planning Economic Development Housing Public Improvements Public Services	7,334,647	200,000	0	7,534,647	7,500,000	Assuming \$7.3 million annual allocation, plus \$200,000 program income.
HOME	public - federal	Acquisition Homebuyer assistance Homeowner rehab Multifamily rental new construction Multifamily rental rehab New construction for ownership TBRA	3,032,373	0	0	3,032,373	3,000,000	Assuming \$3 million annual allocation.

Program	Source of Funds	Uses of Funds	Expected Amount Available Year 1				Expected Amount Available Remainder of ConPlan \$	Narrative Description
			Annual Allocation: \$	Program Income: \$	Prior Year Resources: \$	Total: \$		
ESG	public - federal	Overnight shelter Rapid re-housing (rental assistance)	697,788	0	0	697,788	700,000	ESG will be used for Overnight shelter and Rapid re-housing (rental assistance).  Expected amount available assumes \$700,000 annual allocation.
HTF	public - federal	Acquisition Admin and Planning Homebuyer assistance Multifamily rental new construction Multifamily rental rehab New construction for ownership	3,066,413	0	0	3,066,413	3,000,000	Assuming \$3 million annual allocation.

**Table 5 - Expected Resources – Priority Table**

**Explain how federal funds will leverage those additional resources (private, state and local funds), including a description of how matching requirements will be satisfied**

For CDBG funds, VCDP's Program Guidelines require applicants to provide a full description of how matching requirements will be met including the name and address of the source and indicate whether it is a loan, grant, cash, cash-in-kind, goods or services, etc. Matching requirements are as follows:

(a) Implementation Grants (IG): Match can consist of a loan, grant, cash or cash-in-kind goods or services of a flat 10% of the CDBG funds.

1. Economic Development Loans: borrower must provide cash-equity of at least 10% of the total project cost. This cannot be borrowed or otherwise encumbered money. Note: The Agency may waive the 10% equity match required for a VCDP economic development project if justified.
2. Slums & Blight: Cash or cash-in-kind goods or services of at least 10% of the CDBG funds. This match must directly fund remediation of the S&B condition.

(b) Scattered Site Housing Grants (SS): Match can consist of a loan, grant, cash or cash-in-kind goods or services of a flat 10% of the CDBG funds.

(c) Planning Grants (PG): Match can consist of a loan, grant, cash or cash-in-kind goods or services of a flat 10% of the CDBG funds.

(d) Accessibility Modification Grants (AM): Match can consist of a loan, grant, cash or cash-in-kind goods or services of a flat 10% of the CDBG funds for Handicapped Accessibility work on municipally owned buildings and community libraries.

(e) Home Access Grants (HA): Match can consist of a loan, grant, cash or cash-in-kind goods or services of a flat 10% of the CDBG funds.

If a community has an in-active CDBG/HUD funded Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) as defined by Agency Procedures, at least 20% of the RLF balance on hand must be committed to the project when applying for CDBG funds.

For HOME funds, priority is given to projects with non-federal funding sources for leveraging HOME Funds to ensure the overall HOME Program meets the 25% match requirement. Projects must demonstrate leverage of resources and cost-effectiveness, which may include but is not limited to density bonuses, energy efficiency, lead paint hazard abatement, and historic preservation. Vermont Housing Conservation Board (VHCB) State funding for housing is often used as match for the HOME Program.

ESG requires a dollar for dollar match. Vermont Agency of Human Services, Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) will use State general funds appropriation for homeless assistance as match for the ESG program.



There is no match requirement for HTF funding, however, applications that include the use of non-federal funding sources will be prioritized. As with HOME, VHCBS's State funds will likely serve as a source of non-federal match for HTF assisted projects.

**If appropriate, describe publicly owned land or property located within the jurisdiction that may be used to address the needs identified in the plan**

N/A

## Annual Goals and Objectives

### AP-20 Annual Goals and Objectives – 91.320(c)(3)&(e)

#### Goals Summary Information

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
1	Increase supply and quality of affordable housing	2020	2024	Affordable Housing Public Housing Homeless Non-Homeless Special Needs		Safe, Decent, and Affordable Housing	CDBG: \$3,390,591 HOME: \$3,032,373 HTF: \$3,066,413	Rental units constructed: 70 Household Housing Unit Rental units rehabilitated: 70 Household Housing Unit Homeowner Housing Added: 2 Household Housing Unit Homeowner Housing Rehabilitated: 100 Household Housing Unit Housing for Homeless added: 25 Household Housing Unit
2	Decrease number people experiencing homelessness	2020	2024	Homeless		Individuals and families experiencing homelessness	ESG: \$697,788	Tenant-based rental assistance / Rapid Rehousing: 250 Households Assisted Homeless Person Overnight Shelter: 3000 Persons Assisted
3	Create and retain jobs	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development		Economic Opportunity	CDBG: \$1,883,662	Jobs created/retained: 30 Jobs Businesses assisted: 2 Businesses Assisted

Sort Order	Goal Name	Start Year	End Year	Category	Geographic Area	Needs Addressed	Funding	Goal Outcome Indicator
4	Strengthen communities and improve quality of life	2020	2024	Non-Housing Community Development		Strong Communities	CDBG: \$2,260,394	Public Facility or Infrastructure Activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 4290 Persons Assisted Public service activities other than Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 50 Persons Assisted Public service activities for Low/Moderate Income Housing Benefit: 300 Households Assisted Brownfield acres remediated: 1 Acre

Table 6 – Goals Summary

## Goal Descriptions

1	<b>Goal Name</b>	Increase supply and quality of affordable housing
	<b>Goal Description</b>	To increase the supply and quality of affordable housing by utilizing the strategies described in the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan on a statewide level.
2	<b>Goal Name</b>	Decrease number people experiencing homelessness
	<b>Goal Description</b>	To create and retain jobs by utilizing the strategies described in the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan on a statewide level.
3	<b>Goal Name</b>	Create and retain jobs
	<b>Goal Description</b>	ESG funds will be fully leveraged along with State resources to reduce the number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness.
4	<b>Goal Name</b>	Strengthen communities and improve quality of life
	<b>Goal Description</b>	To promote downtown preservation and revitalization, remediate and reuse of brownfields, and increase access to public facilities and services.

**Estimate the number of extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income families to whom the jurisdiction will provide affordable housing as defined by HOME 91.215(b)**

HOME Program funds will be used exclusively for rental housing development (new construction and rehabilitation). Approximately 40 households will benefit from HOME assisted units annually. All 40 HOME units will be restricted to households at or below 60% area median income at initial occupancy. For projects with 5 or more HOME units, at least 20% will be restricted to households at or below 50% area median income. The rents shall be restricted to the applicable HOME rent limits published by HUD. It is worth noting however, that historically nearly 90% of HOME designated units are initially occupied by households at or below 50% AMI, with over 55% at or below 30% AMI.

HTF program funding will be used to construct new multifamily rental housing and to rehabilitate existing multifamily rental housing. HTF units will serve extremely low-income families. It is anticipated that approximately 3 Vermont projects will be awarded HTF funds resulting in about 13 units.

ESG Program funds for Rapid Rehousing will be used exclusively to provide tenant-based rental assistance for very low-income households (below 30% AMI) in housing that is at fair market rent or below as published by HUD. An estimated 250 households will be assisted with ESG Rapid Rehousing and state matching funds.

CDBG program funding will be used to construct new multifamily rental housing and to rehabilitate existing multifamily rental housing. In addition, CDBG funding will be used to rehabilitate existing homeownership units. It is estimated that approximately 70% of all CDBG assisted units will serve households below 50% area median income. For 2023 it is estimated that CDBG funding will assist approximately 70 affordable rental units and 70 affordable homeowner units that meet the HOME definition.

## AP-25 Allocation Priorities – 91.320(d)

### Introduction:

In keeping with the State’s long-standing policy, the State does not plan to target assistance to specific geographic regions or activities. State law requires that CDBG funds, dispersed through VCDP are awarded on a competitive basis, based on an evaluation of need, impact and feasibility, and subject to HUD limitations. Likewise, VHCB allocates HOME funds on a competitive basis, except for up to 5% for general operating assistance for Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) to implement HOME projects, and HTF is allocated on a competitive basis in accordance with the HTF Allocation Plan. ESG funds are awarded to eligible nonprofits, including community and/or faith-based organizations following the selection process of the Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity.

### Funding Allocation Priorities

	Increase supply and quality of affordable housing (%)	Decrease number people experiencing homelessness (%)	Create and retain jobs (%)	Strengthen communities and improve quality of life (%)	Total (%)
CDBG	45	0	25	30	100
HOME	100	0	0	0	100
ESG	0	100	0	0	100
HTF	100	0	0	0	100

Table 7 – Funding Allocation Priorities

### Reason for Allocation Priorities

The State’s allocation priorities are based on the priority needs identified in the Housing Needs Assessment and further developed through the citizen participation and consultation process to meet the goals identified in the plan.

Due to increased demand and cost of projects, the DHCD considered increasing the allocation percentage under strengthen communities and improve quality of life and decreasing the percentage under create and retain jobs. After consulting with the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board, DHCD decided to leave the allocation percentages unchanged for this AAP.

### How will the proposed distribution of funds will address the priority needs and specific objectives described in the Consolidated Plan?

The proposed distribution of funds addresses the priority needs identified by allocating funding to the most critical needs identified through the Housing Needs Assessment, market analysis, citizen participation process, and consultation with service providers, and agencies and organizations in housing and community development, job creation, and homelessness. Vermont continues to see affordable housing, reducing homelessness and job creation as a strong need for the State. These needs

are clearly reflected in the State's allocation of CDBG, HOME, and HTF resources. Specifically, ESG funds will be fully leveraged along with State resources to reduce the number of individuals and households experiencing homelessness. These funds will also focus on shortening the length of time people experience homelessness and reduce the number of individuals returning to homelessness.

This distribution is further informed by past program performance and evaluations of how CDBG, HOME, HTF, and ESG can be used most effectively and efficiently given program rules.

## AP-30 Methods of Distribution – 91.320(d)&(k)

### Introduction:

This section summarizes the methods of distribution for State programs that administer HUD funds, as well as the National Housing Trust Fund. In each of the State programs described below, the State encourages applications for projects that include more than one goal or objective, or which address more than one Priority Need (e.g., an application for a housing project that also consists of a component of commercial space; or a public facility project that also consists of a component of public services).

### Distribution Methods

**Table 8 - Distribution Methods by State Program**

<b>1</b>	<b>State Program Name:</b>	HOME Investment Partnerships Program
	<b>Funding Sources:</b>	HOME
	<b>Describe the state program addressed by the Method of Distribution.</b>	<p>HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) allocation for FFY2023 is <b>\$3,032,373</b>. The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) is the agency responsible for developing the Consolidated Plan, and State statute designates the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) as the agency responsible for administering HOME funds.</p> <p>In FFY 2023, HOME funds will be used for the following programs with investments in the form of grants or long-term deferred loans:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Acquisition and Rehabilitation Program. HOME funds will be used for acquisition and rehabilitation of conventional rental properties to make them affordable to low income households and/or to convert them to cooperatives, and to preserve existing affordable rental properties.</li> </ol> <p>When HOME funds are used for rehabilitation, the work must be performed according to the VHCB's written rehabilitation standards, which describe the methods and materials to be used, and the entire unit must be brought up to applicable property standards as described in 24 CFR 92.251(b).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. New Construction Program. HOME funds will be used for the production of conventional rental properties that serve an area or market where existing housing stock is limited and/or to provide housing for households/individuals with documented special needs. Units created under this program must be affordable to low income households.</li> <li>3. Refinancing existing debt. Multi-family rental projects developed by locally based housing organizations that receive HOME funds for</li> </ol>



	<p>rehabilitation may utilize HOME funds to refinance existing debt if there is significant rehabilitation of the property proposed in addition to the refinancing (See the HOME Refinancing Guidelines in AP-90 HOME Program Specific Requirements).</p> <p>Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs)</p> <p>At least fifteen percent (15%) or approximately \$454,856 of Vermont’s HOME allocation will be used for rental projects developed, owned, or sponsored by qualified Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) as defined in 24 CFR 92.2.</p> <p>Up to five percent (5%) or approximately \$151,618 of the State's total HOME allocation may be used for general operating assistance for qualified CHDOs who are expected to receive CHDO project funds within 24 months. CHDO Operating funds will be awarded through VHCB's organizational grant application process.</p> <p>Statewide Allocation</p> <p>The State’s allocation including CHDO project funds, but not including Administration or CHDO Operating) will be distributed to projects on a competitive basis throughout the state, excluding the City of Burlington which has its own allocation.</p> <p>Program Administration</p> <p>The State's HOME program will be administered by VHCB pursuant to a contract with DHCD.</p> <p>The State recognizes that its Consolidated Plan cycle is not consistent with the ability of its agent, VHCB, to commit HOME funds. Considering the fact that Vermont’s HOME Program is recognized by HUD as a national leader in achieving the goals of the HOME Program, we do not find this inconsistency to be a significant issue in program delivery.</p> <p>Administrative Costs</p> <p>The State intends to use up to 10% of the HOME allocation for administrative and planning costs, distributing funds among the two entities involved with administering Vermont's HOME Program: DHCD and VHCB. The State may use approximately \$303,237 (10%) in FFY 2023 funds for eligible administrative costs.</p>
<p><b>Describe all of the criteria that will be used to select</b></p>	<p>Eligible Applicants</p> <p>Information about the HOME Program is available on VHCB’s website, including links to the HOME Program Handbook, application deadlines and Board meeting dates, and the common housing application. VHCB</p>

<p><b>applications and the relative importance of these criteria.</b></p>	<p>works closely with a statewide network of non-profit affordable housing developers who are provided this information. In addition, VHCB provides information about the HOME Program application process and requirements to for-profit developers when inquiries are received. General Information for Applicants Seeking VHCB and/or HOME Program Funds for Affordable Housing Development is available here: <a href="https://vhcb.org/our-programs/housing/housing-applications">https://vhcb.org/our-programs/housing/housing-applications</a>.</p> <p>Eligibility to apply for HOME funds will be no more restrictive than required by HOME regulations. Consistent with the regulations, at least 15% of the annual allocation will be used for projects developed, owned, or sponsored by qualified CHDOs, as defined in 24 CFR 92.2. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis and acted upon at regularly scheduled VHCB Board meetings based on project readiness. VHCB uses the State's Common Housing Application with an additional VHCB/HOME application supplement and checklist.</p> <p><b>Threshold Criteria</b></p> <p>The following criteria must exist in any application to be considered for a commitment of HOME funds:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The project must be perpetually affordable.</li> <li>2. At least one of the Consolidated Plan housing related goals must be included.</li> <li>3. Preference shall be given to projects located in the State's Designated Downtowns, Village Centers, neighborhood development areas and other areas that are consistent with the state's historic settlement pattern and "Smart Growth".</li> </ol> <p><b>Consolidated Plan Affordable Housing Goals</b></p> <p>On a competitive basis, applications that have met the threshold criteria described above will be evaluated and ranked according to how many of the Consolidated Plan Affordable Housing Strategies are addressed by the project.</p> <p><b>Efficient Use of Resources</b></p> <p>Consistent with 24 CFR Section 92.250(b), projects seeking HOME funds will require an analysis of whether the amount of HOME funds invested is reasonable to achieve affordable housing. This analysis must confirm</p>
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	that the project can be sustained from rent levels affordable to the targeted population while maintaining adequate levels of maintenance or repair and fully funding reserves required by lenders or grantors. This analysis will be done by VHCB for each application.
<b>If only summary criteria were described, how can potential applicants access application manuals or other state publications describing the application criteria? (CDBG only)</b>	N/A - CDBG only
<b>Describe the process for awarding funds to state recipients and how the state will make its allocation available to units of general local government, and non-profit organizations, including community and faith-based organizations. (ESG only)</b>	N/A - ESG only
<b>Identify the method of selecting project sponsors (including providing full access to grassroots faith-based and other</b>	N/A – HOPWA only

<b>community-based organizations). (HOPWA only)</b>	
<b>Describe how resources will be allocated among funding categories.</b>	Funding will be allocated by funding category based on the merit of the proposals submitted and the demonstrated market demand.
<b>Describe threshold factors and grant size limits.</b>	<p>In order to be considered for HOME funding, all applications must meet the threshold requirements stated above. In addition, projects must meet all HOME Program and other applicable federal requirements.</p> <p>There is no set maximum HOME award; however, applicants should be aware that demand for HOME funds is competitive.</p> <p>The HOME maximum per-unit subsidy limits are as follows: \$65,000 for 0 bedrooms, \$75,000 for 1 bedroom, \$90,000 for 2 bedrooms, \$115,000 for 3 bedrooms, and \$125,000 for 4 bedrooms. These limits represent approximately 50% of the HUD maximums. VHCB may, on a case-by-case basis, exceed these limits if there is a compelling reason to do so, as long as HUD's limits are not exceeded.</p>
<b>What are the outcome measures expected as a result of the method of distribution?</b>	With the FFY23 HOME allocation of \$3,032,373, it is estimated annually HOME will assist 5-8 rental projects, resulting in approximately 39 units affordable to low- and very-low income households.
2	<b>State Program Name:</b> Housing Opportunity Grant Program
	<b>Funding Sources:</b> ESG
	<p><b>Describe the state program addressed by the Method of Distribution.</b></p> <p>OEO's Housing Opportunity Grant Program combines ESG funds with state homeless assistance funds to help nonprofit organizations work within their local Continuums of Care to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the incidence and duration of homelessness;</li> <li>• Shorten the length of time an individual or household is homeless; and</li> <li>• Prevent homelessness.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Describe all of the criteria that will be used to select applications and the relative importance of these criteria.</b></p>	<p>Selection of applicants for ESG funding under the consolidated Housing Opportunity Grant Program will be made based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting of criteria as outlined in this document and detailed in the Notice of Funding</li> <li>• For renewal requests and returning applicants, previous program performance under the Housing Opportunity Grant Program.</li> <li>• Ability to affirmatively reach underserved populations, including black, indigenous and people of color, people with disabilities, persons with limited English proficiency, New Americans, etc.</li> <li>• The applicant’s history of providing effective shelter or services to the homeless.</li> <li>• Address an identified homeless need or gap in the district and effectively collaborate with Continuum of Care partners to improve outcomes for the homeless and those at-risk of homelessness.</li> <li>• Demonstrate leveraged funding to support the proposed program.</li> <li>• For emergency shelter applicants, ensure the continued availability of clean and safe emergency shelter.</li> <li>• Support the rapid transition of participants from homelessness or emergency shelter to permanent housing and shorten the length of time people experience homelessness.</li> <li>• Prevent homelessness for people experiencing housing crisis through targeted, coordinated, and effective prevention and diversion activities.</li> <li>• Provide appropriate follow-up to support stability and measure outcomes. Reduce the number of individuals and families returning to homelessness.</li> <li>• Support education, training, and employment activities for clients, and help participants to access other appropriate community services and mainstream benefits and support services (including medical care, mental health and substance abuse treatment, counseling, supervision, and other services essential for achieving independent living).</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant’s engagement of homeless individuals and families in the governance or operation of programming and services, to the maximum extent practicable.</li> <li>• Responsibly manage public funds and reporting expectations required under a grant agreement with the State of Vermont.</li> </ul> <p>Actual funding will be based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requested amount (total request and spending plan)</li> <li>• Available funds</li> <li>• Strength of application demonstrating application criteria are met</li> </ul>
<p><b>If only summary criteria were described, how can potential applicants access application manuals or other state publications describing the application criteria? (CDBG only)</b></p>	<p>N/A - CDBG only</p>
<p><b>Describe the process for awarding funds to state recipients and how the state will make its allocation available to units of general local government, and non-profit organizations, including community and faith-based organizations. (ESG only)</b></p>	<p>In April 2023, OEO will release a Request for Proposals for the Housing Opportunity Grant Program (which includes ESG program funds). Current awards (SFY2023) were reviewed and evaluated by AHS OEO based on local need, capacity, approach, and local coordination. Vermont will make ESG sub-awards with successful applicants for ESG-funded activities under Housing Opportunity Grant Program agreements. One or more grants will be awarded by OEO to Vermont municipalities, or, with municipal approval, Vermont nonprofits whose purpose is to shelter, serve, and re-house the homeless.</p>

<p><b>Identify the method of selecting project sponsors (including providing full access to grassroots faith-based and other community-based organizations). (HOPWA only)</b></p>	<p>N/A – HOPWA only</p>
<p><b>Describe how resources will be allocated among funding categories.</b></p>	<p>Decisions on how to prioritize funding categories are based on public forum input through the Consolidated Plan process, guidance and national reports released by HUD, the National Alliance to End Homelessness, and the US Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH); the Vermont Council on Homelessness five-year plan to end homelessness; and an acknowledgement that homelessness is inherently traumatic for families and individuals. In addition, decisions are informed by discussions with CoC stakeholders regarding funding priorities.</p> <p>OEO estimates the following allocation to planned activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Shelter (Operations &amp; Essential Services): 64.5%</li> <li>• HMIS: 22%</li> <li>• Rapid Rehousing (Financial &amp; Rental Assistance): 6.0%</li> <li>• Administration: 7.5% (maximum allowed)</li> </ul> <p>Specific funding within the major categories of Rapid Rehousing and Emergency Shelter may shift based on the applications received and awarded.</p>
<p><b>Describe threshold factors and grant size limits.</b></p>	<p>Eligible applicants are municipalities and nonprofits including community and faith-based organizations. New applicants, and applicants who have recently relocated their operations to another municipality, must submit a completed Certification of Local Government Approval with their application.</p> <p>Faith-based organizations are required to have separate 501c3 status established to meet eligibility requirements.</p> <p>All grantees must be in compliance with program guidelines and applicable state and federal policies and procedures, including compliance with federal nondiscrimination law. This includes certification from all Emergency Shelter applicants that the assisted</p>

		<p>property will be maintained as an Emergency Shelter for the period of funded assistance. All Shelters must have passed ESG shelter habitability inspection within the past year.</p> <p>There are no grant size limits per se for ESG funds. Grants to subrecipients of ESG funds in the current state fiscal year range from \$21,000 to \$375,000.</p>
	<b>What are the outcome measures expected as a result of the method of distribution?</b>	This method of distribution will support the State’s goal of serving 250 households through rapid rehousing services and providing emergency overnight shelter to 3,000 people.
3	<b>State Program Name:</b>	Housing Trust Fund
	<b>Funding Sources:</b>	HTF
	<b>Describe the state program addressed by the Method of Distribution.</b>	National Housing Trust Fund (HTF) dollars will be distributed statewide, including the City of Burlington. HTF funds will be awarded on a competitive basis to locally driven projects that address the criteria outlined in AP-90, the 2023 Vermont HTF Allocation plan as well as the priority housing needs as identified in the State’s Consolidated Plan.
	<b>Describe all of the criteria that will be used to select applications and the relative importance of these criteria.</b>	<p>The following threshold criteria must exist in any application to be considered for a HTF award: 1) the project must include the creation or preservation of permanent rental housing (transitional housing and shelters are not eligible), 2) the housing must remain perpetually affordable after the expiration of the HTF required period via a VHCB Housing Subsidy Covenant, 3) at least one of the State’s Consolidated Plan housing priorities must be addressed, and 4) there must be a reasonable expectation that the project will be ready to proceed within 18 months.</p> <p>Applications will be reviewed by staff according to VHCB’s Affordable Housing Policy (<a href="https://vhcb.org/sites/default/files/policy/housing/housing.pdf">https://vhcb.org/sites/default/files/policy/housing/housing.pdf</a>) as well as VHCB’s Underwriting Policy and Procedures, (<a href="https://vhcb.org/sites/default/files/policy/housing/Project-Underwriting-Policies-+-Procedures.pdf">https://vhcb.org/sites/default/files/policy/housing/Project-Underwriting-Policies-+-Procedures.pdf</a>), which includes analysis in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development capacity and fiscal soundness of the applicant, and experience of the development team</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project location</li> <li>• Market demand</li> <li>• Budget documents</li> <li>• Plans and specifications</li> <li>• HTF and other applicable federal requirements</li> <li>• Developer/owner profit standard and evaluation</li> </ul> <p>In addition to VHCB’s applicable policies, applications for funding submitted by eligible entities will be reviewed, and funding will be prioritized, according to how the following criteria are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the applicant's ability to obligate HTF funds and undertake eligible activities in a timely manner;</li> <li>• The extent to which the project has a mechanism or strategy to ensure deep affordability of the HTF units throughout the compliance period so that rents are affordable to extremely low-income families;</li> <li>• the duration of the units' affordability period;</li> <li>• the merits of the application in meeting the priority housing needs as identified in the State’s Consolidated Plan.</li> <li>• safe, decent, affordable housing (increase the supply and quality of affordable housing),</li> <li>• individuals and families experiencing homelessness (decrease the number experiencing homelessness, increase supply and quality of affordable housing)</li> </ul>
<p><b>If only summary criteria were described, how can potential applicants access application manuals or other state publications describing the application criteria? (CDBG only)</b></p>	<p>N/A - CDBG only</p>
<p><b>Describe the process for</b></p>	<p>N/A - ESG only</p>

<p><b>awarding funds to state recipients and how the state will make its allocation available to units of general local government, and non-profit organizations, including community and faith-based organizations. (ESG only)</b></p>	
<p><b>Identify the method of selecting project sponsors (including providing full access to grassroots faith-based and other community-based organizations). (HOPWA only)</b></p>	<p>N/A – HOPWA only</p>
<p><b>Describe how resources will be allocated among funding categories.</b></p>	<p>The HTF regulations allow up to 10% of HTF funds to be used for homeownership activities; however, given the extremely low income (ELI) targeting requirements of the program and the need for rental housing affordable to ELI households in the state, Vermont will use HTF program funds exclusively for rental housing to meet the priority housing needs as identified by the State’s Consolidated Plan. In accordance with HTF regulations, up to 10% of the State’s HTF allocation will be used for administration.</p> <p>HTF project funds may be used to pay for the following eligible costs: development hard costs, refinancing, acquisition, related soft costs, operating cost assistance and operating cost reserves (not to exceed 1/3 of the state’s annual allocation), relocation, and costs related to payment of loans. Awards of HTF funds will be made in the form of grants or 0%, 30-year deferred loans in order to minimize project debt and maximize affordability to ELI households.</p>

<p><b>Describe threshold factors and grant size limits.</b></p>	<p>In order to be considered for HTF funding, all applications must meet the threshold requirements stated above. In addition, projects must meet all HTF and other applicable federal requirements.</p> <p>There is no set maximum HTF award; however, applicants should be aware that demand for HTF funds may be competitive. In the still early years of this program, to allow maximum flexibility while VHCB and its partners gain experience using HTF to create rental housing affordable to ELI households, the maximum per-unit subsidy limits for HTF will be set at HUD’s applicable limits for the HOME Program. These limits are currently \$159,754 for OBRs, \$183,132 for 1BRs, \$222,694 for 2BRs, \$288,094 for 3 BRs, and \$316,236 for 4BRs+.</p>
<p><b>What are the outcome measures expected as a result of the method of distribution?</b></p>	<p>With the FFY23 HTF allocation of about \$3.066 million, it is estimated that HTF dollars will assist 2-4 rental projects, resulting in an estimated 13 units affordable to ELI households.</p>
<p><b>4 State Program Name:</b></p>	<p>Special Housing Projects Pilot</p>
<p><b>Funding Sources:</b></p>	<p>CDBG</p>
<p><b>Describe the state program addressed by the Method of Distribution.</b></p>	<p>The Special Housing Projects Pilot is intended to provide seed funds to encourage innovative projects that address housing health issues and provide net new units with limited public investment. Funds of up to \$250,000 per applicant and an annual maximum of \$750,000 will be administered through the existing Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) protocol with the addition of several special criteria. Consideration will be made to the percentage of public investment contributing to the total project proposal, the number of public funding sources being utilized, ability of applicant to leverage Private Activity Bond Cap and potentially “4%” Low Income Housing Tax Credits and with consideration to the per unit development cost.</p> <p>The VCDP is funded with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, 42 U.S.C. Section 5301 et seq., herein referred to as the "FEDERAL ACT." All municipalities in Vermont, except Burlington (which receives funds directly from HUD), are eligible to apply for CDBG funds.</p> <p>The VCDP is authorized under the Vermont Community Development Act, Title 10 V.S.A. Chapter 29, referred to in this Consolidated Plan as the "STATE ACT." The lead agency, ACCD, administers the VCDP through the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). All</p>

	<p>municipalities, unless currently sanctioned, are eligible to apply for CDBG funding through a competitive, needs based application process. Funding levels, maximum and minimum grant requests, selection criteria, State priorities, and application assistance can be found on the next pages and in more detail at the VCDP Website.</p>
<p><b>Describe all of the criteria that will be used to select applications and the relative importance of these criteria.</b></p>	<p>The State Act stipulates that the allocation of CDBG funds shall be competitive, ensure that a wide range of community development activities be eligible, and be based on a system that measures the need and impact of the proposed projects (10 VSA Sec.687). The VCDP has established an application process and selection criteria to meet the intent of the State Act. The VCDP uses a Web-based Application System. Applications are completed online and are submitted by municipalities. VCDP staff then review each application for eligibility and completeness, before conducting a thorough analysis of each eligible application. The VCDP Board then reviews each application and DHCD staff recommendations and makes funding recommendations to the ACCD Secretary on behalf of the Governor. Staff analyses of the applications are written based on the following criteria and must meet one of three HUD National Objectives (Low and Moderate Income, Slums and Blight, and Urgent Need). The selection criterion is as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Project Need: The project must meet a documented community or regional need. Determinations will be based on evaluation of such factors as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need documentation; Appropriate solution; Appropriate funding; Meeting Consolidated Plan priorities; Meeting local and regional plan priorities; Health/safety risks to beneficiaries; Impact if project is not funded; Ability of project to address recommendations identified in legislative and stakeholder reports</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Project Impact: The project must show how well it meets a national objective and how well it impacts the community. Determinations will be based on evaluation of such factors as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to meet the need Number/percentage of low and moderate-income persons directly benefiting; Longevity of the benefit; Beneficiary involvement in developing the project; Indirect benefit to low and moderate-income persons and the community</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Project Feasibility: The project must be attainable and the representations and commitments within the application must be believable. This will include such factors as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Readiness to start/Proposed time frame is realistic; Proposed benefit is realistic; Costs are appropriate and justified; Prior VCDP performance record</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

	<p>Project Cost and Leverage: Projects funded by the Special Housing Project Pilot must demonstrate an ability to achieve net new housing units with limited public investment. Factors to be considered will include:</p> <p>Per unit costs in line with characteristics of the project; Percent of project funded by public investment; Ability of project to leverage underutilized resources such as Private Activity Bond Cap and/or “4%” Low Income Housing Tax Credits.</p>
<p><b>If only summary criteria were described, how can potential applicants access application manuals or other state publications describing the application criteria? (CDBG only)</b></p>	<p>Application manuals and publications outlining criteria are available on the VCDP webpage; <a href="https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/vcdp/applicant-guidance">https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/vcdp/applicant-guidance</a>.</p>
<p><b>Describe the process for awarding funds to state recipients and how the state will make its allocation available to units of general local government, and non-profit organizations, including community and faith-based organizations. (ESG only)</b></p>	<p>N/A – ESG only</p>
<p><b>Identify the method of selecting project sponsors (including</b></p>	<p>N/A – HOPWA only</p>

<p><b>providing full access to grassroots faith-based and other community-based organizations). (HOPWA only)</b></p>	
<p><b>Describe how resources will be allocated among funding categories.</b></p>	<p>All funds available through the Special Housing Projects Pilot are to be awarded to address the goal of Increasing the Supply and Quality of Housing. This Pilot will be limited to a maximum of \$750,000 annually with no individual application eligible for more than \$250,000.</p>
<p><b>Describe threshold factors and grant size limits.</b></p>	<p>All applications for CDBG funds must meet the following eligibility thresholds to be considered for review. These eligibility thresholds are statutory and cannot be waived by the Agency. Failure to meet all eligibility thresholds will result in rejection of the Application.</p> <p>Eligible Applicant: The only eligible applicants are Vermont towns and cities and incorporated villages chartered to function as general-purpose units of local government.</p> <p>A municipality may apply as a single applicant, as the lead applicant of a consortium, as a member of a consortium, but not as a single applicant and as lead applicant of a consortium.</p> <p>Eligible Activity: Only those activities eligible under the Federal Act may be funded under this program.</p> <p>Federal Objective: Each proposed VCDP activity must meet at least one national objective. The national objective claim must be fully supported, and in some cases, the AGENCY should pre-approve your approach for meeting the national objective.</p> <p>State Objective: Each proposed VCDP activity must meet at least one State objective.</p> <p>Public Hearing: Each VCDP applicant must conduct at least one (1) public hearing with notice as required by the STATE ACT, prior to application submission. HUD regulations require a minimum of two (2) public hearings, each at a different stage of the program, to obtain citizens' views and responding to proposals and questions. The VCDP complies with this regulation by requiring the first public hearing during the application stage and the second public hearing prior to the completion date of the funded grant program.</p>

		<p>Municipal Plan: Each VCDP applicant, including consortium members, must have a municipal plan adopted in accordance with 24 VSA Ch. 117. The plan must identify the municipality’s community development needs including housing and economic development as well as the needs of low and moderate-income persons and the activities to be undertaken to meet such needs.</p> <p>Anti-Displacement Plan: Under the provisions of the Uniform Act, 42 USC §4601 et seq., each successful applicant, including all municipalities in joint applications, but excluding Planning Grant applicants, must submit a Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan (ADP) and state whether the proposed activity will result in displacement, relocation, property demolition, or property change of use. Please see the VCDP Program Guide at: <a href="https://accd.vermont.gov/sites/accdnew/files/documents/CD-VCDP-Program-Guide.pdf">https://accd.vermont.gov/sites/accdnew/files/documents/CD-VCDP-Program-Guide.pdf</a> for a detailed description of eligibility criteria and program thresholds.</p> <p>For grant size limits - see CDBG Grant Types, Funding Limits and Match Requirements.</p>
	<b>What are the outcome measures expected as a result of the method of distribution?</b>	This method of distribution will support the State’s 2023 Consolidated Plan goals in housing, economic development, and public facilities and services. With a maximum annual amount of \$750,000 applied to this Pilot outcome measures will include the number of net new affordable rental units that are brought onto the market.
5	<b>State Program Name:</b>	Vermont Community Development Program
	<b>Funding Sources:</b>	CDBG
	<b>Describe the state program addressed by the Method of Distribution.</b>	<p>The Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) is funded with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, 42 U.S.C. Section 5301 et seq., herein referred to as the "FEDERAL ACT." All municipalities in Vermont, except Burlington (which receives funds directly from HUD), are eligible to apply for CDBG funds.</p> <p>The VCDP is authorized under the Vermont Community Development Act, Title 10 V.S.A. Chapter 29, referred to in this Consolidated Plan as the "STATE ACT." The lead agency, ACCD, administers the VCDP through the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). All municipalities, unless currently sanctioned, are eligible to apply for CDBG</p>

	<p>funding through a competitive, needs based application process. Funding levels, maximum and minimum grant requests, selection criteria, State priorities, and application assistance can be found on the next pages and in more detail at the VCDP Website.</p> <p>The VCDP provides eligibility criteria, notices of funding availability, a Program Guide and Application Instructions on its website:  <a href="https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/vcdp">https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/vcdp</a></p> <p>The Website is used to provide potential applicants and existing grantees with all the resources needed to apply for funding, receive technical assistance and successfully manage their projects. VCDP Staff are readily available to assist potential applicants, current applicants, and existing grantees. Each year, VCDP notifies (Via Email) every eligible municipality in the state of the availability of CDBG funding and the application process.</p> <p>This outreach and communication is critical for VCDP since funding is not directly allocated or targeted to specific communities or regions within the state. VCDP provides an open application process with applications accepted throughout the year and funding availability guaranteed throughout the year. Three VCDP Board meetings were established for the FFY 2022 Program Year. DHCD considered reducing the number of scheduled VCDP Board meetings to two for the FFY 2023 Program Year but decided to continue with three scheduled meetings. Municipalities are encouraged to apply for funding throughout the year.</p> <p>More information on VCDP Board Meeting dates, application instructions and assistance accessing the program can be found at:  <a href="https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/vcdp/applicant-guidance">https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/vcdp/applicant-guidance</a></p>
<p><b>Describe all of the criteria that will be used to select applications and the relative importance of these criteria.</b></p>	<p>The State Act stipulates that the allocation of CDBG funds shall be competitive, ensure that a wide range of community development activities be eligible, and be based on a system that measures the need and impact of the proposed projects (10 VSA Sec.687). The VCDP has established an application process and selection criteria to meet the intent of the State Act. The VCDP uses a Web-based Application System. Applications are completed online and are submitted by municipalities. VCDP staff then review each application for eligibility and completeness, before conducting a thorough analysis of each eligible application. The VCDP Board then reviews each application, interviews and questions the</p>



	<p>applicants using the below criteria and makes funding recommendations to the ACCD Secretary on behalf of the Governor. Each of the three criteria has equal weight and staff analyses of the applications are written based on these criteria and must meet one of three HUD National Objectives (Low and Moderate Income, Slums and Blight, and Urgent Need). The selection criterion is as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Project Need: The project must meet a documented community or regional need. Determinations will be based on evaluation of such factors as: <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Need documentation; Appropriate solution; Appropriate funding; Meeting Consolidated Plan priorities; Meeting local and regional plan priorities; Health/safety risks to beneficiaries; Impact if project is not funded</p> </li> <li>2. Project Impact: The project must show how well it meets a national objective and how well it impacts the community. Determinations will be based on evaluation of such factors as: <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Ability to meet the need Number/percentage of low and moderate-income persons directly benefiting; Longevity of the benefit; Beneficiary involvement in developing the project; Indirect benefit to low and moderate-income persons and the community</p> </li> <li>3. Project Feasibility: The project must be attainable and the representations and commitments within the application must be believable. This will include such factors as: <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Readiness to start/Proposed time frame is realistic; Proposed benefit is realistic; Costs are appropriate and justified; Prior VCDP performance record</p> </li> </ol> <p>Please see the VCDP Program Guide at:  <a href="https://accd.vermont.gov/sites/accdnew/files/documents/CD-VCDP-Program-Guide.pdf">https://accd.vermont.gov/sites/accdnew/files/documents/CD-VCDP-Program-Guide.pdf</a> for a detailed description of the program including; selection criteria, funding levels and application instructions.</p> <p>All CDBG applicants seeking funding for affordable multi-family rental housing (for new units and rehabilitation of existing units) shall describe the plans and tools they have in place to achieve the goal of making available at least 15% of the units in their portfolio to those who are homeless.</p>
<p><b>If only summary criteria were described, how can potential applicants</b></p>	<p>See the VCDP Program Guide at: <a href="https://accd.vermont.gov/sites/accdnew/files/documents/CD-VCDP-Program-Guide.pdf">https://accd.vermont.gov/sites/accdnew/files/documents/CD-VCDP-Program-Guide.pdf</a> for a detailed description of the program including selection criteria, funding levels, and application instructions.</p>

<p><b>access application manuals or other state publications describing the application criteria? (CDBG only)</b></p>	
<p><b>Describe the process for awarding funds to state recipients and how the state will make its allocation available to units of general local government, and non-profit organizations, including community and faith-based organizations. (ESG only)</b></p>	<p>N/A - ESG only</p>
<p><b>Identify the method of selecting project sponsors (including providing full access to grassroots faith-based and other community-based organizations). (HOPWA only)</b></p>	<p>N/A – HOPWA only</p>
<p><b>Describe how resources will be allocated among funding categories.</b></p>	<p>The VCDP must expend at least 70% of the HUD Award over a period of three program years to fund activities that principally benefit persons of low and moderate income. Grants for Activities which aid in the prevention or elimination of slums and blight (Slums and Blight) or that are designed to meet urgent community development needs (Urgent Need) do not necessarily provide a direct benefit to persons with low</p>

	<p>and moderate incomes. Such awards, therefore, must be drawn from the remaining 30% of the CDBG award over a period of three program years. Grants for these activities combined will be limited to 13% of the total HUD Award over a period of three program years.</p> <p>Costs for grant activities known as General Administration may not exceed 12% of a CDBG grant award. This limitation assures compliance with the federally imposed cap of 20% of the total Annual HUD Award and program income that may be used for all VCDP planning and general administrative purposes, including both State and local costs. The federal share of State administration funding is capped at 2% of the annual CDBG award, which must be matched by a minimum of 2% in State funds, plus 1% for technical assistance and an additional \$100,000 of unmatched HUD funding for a total HUD funded State administration of 3% of the CDBG award plus \$100,000. The State does not intend to use any Program Income for State administration.</p> <p>For the FFY 2023 Program Year, the VCDP will set aside \$600,000 for Accessibility Modification Grants (AM) until the last funding round during the period July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024. The grant size limit for AM grants is also increasing from \$100,000 up to \$150,000. Any funds remaining may then be awarded to Implementation and Planning Grants (IG, PG).</p> <p>The Federal Act restricts the total funds that may be used to fund activities known as Public Services to 15% of the Annual HUD Award that is allocated for assistance to municipalities. The maximum allowable for public service activities is shown in Table – CDBG FFY2023 Distribution Plan.</p> <p>The State may use up to one percent of the Annual HUD Awards for FFY88 through FFY2023 to the extent funds remain undistributed for these program years to provide technical assistance to local governments and nonprofit recipients. The amount established for this Consolidated Plan is shown in Table – CDBG FFY2023 Distribution Plan.</p> <p>VCDP will set aside up to 35% of its annual CDBG allocation for Scattered-Site (SS) Housing Rehab Grants to be distributed at the first funding round during the period for the period July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024. Any funds remaining may then be awarded to Implementation and Planning Grants (IG, PG) at the last funding round of the FFY 2023 Program Year.</p> <p>VCDP will include a target of up to \$500,000 for projects that support transitional recovery housing that includes wrap around services for individuals being served to supplement the state’s Recovery Housing</p>
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	<p>Funds for FFY 2023 to be awarded on a competitive basis against regular applications.</p>
<p><b>Describe threshold factors and grant size limits.</b></p>	<p>All applications for CDBG funds must meet the following eligibility thresholds to be considered for review. These eligibility thresholds are statutory and cannot be waived by the Agency. Failure to meet all eligibility thresholds will result in rejection of the Application.</p> <p>Eligible Applicant: The only eligible applicants are Vermont towns and cities and incorporated villages chartered to function as general-purpose units of local government.</p> <p>A municipality may apply as a single applicant, as the lead applicant of a consortium, as a member of a consortium, but not as a single applicant and as lead applicant of a consortium.</p> <p>Eligible Activity: Only those activities eligible under the Federal Act may be funded under this program.</p> <p>Federal Objective: Each proposed VCDP activity must meet at least one national objective. The national objective claim must be fully supported, and in some cases, the AGENCY should pre-approve your approach for meeting the national objective.</p> <p>State Objective: Each proposed VCDP activity must meet at least one State objective.</p> <p>Public Hearing: Each VCDP applicant must conduct at least one (1) public hearing with notice as required by the STATE ACT, prior to application submission. HUD regulations require a minimum of two (2) public hearings, each at a different stage of the program, to obtain citizens' views and responding to proposals and questions. The VCDP complies with this regulation by requiring the first public hearing during the application stage and the second public hearing prior to the completion date of the funded grant program.</p> <p>Municipal Plan: Each VCDP applicant, including consortium members, must have a municipal plan adopted in accordance with 24 VSA Ch. 117. The plan must identify the municipality's community development needs including housing and economic development as well as the needs of low and moderate-income persons and the activities to be undertaken to meet such needs.</p> <p>Anti-Displacement Plan: Under the provisions of the Uniform Act, 42 USC §4601 et seq., each successful applicant, including all municipalities in joint applications, but excluding Planning Grant applicants, must submit a Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan (ADP)</p>

	<p>and state whether the proposed activity will result in displacement, relocation, property demolition, or property change of use. Please see the VCDP Program Guide at: <a href="https://accd.vermont.gov/sites/accdnew/files/documents/CD-VCDP-Program-Guide.pdf">https://accd.vermont.gov/sites/accdnew/files/documents/CD-VCDP-Program-Guide.pdf</a> for a detailed description of eligibility criteria and program thresholds.</p> <p>For grant size limits - see CDBG Grant Types, Funding Limits and Match Requirements.</p>
<p><b>What are the outcome measures expected as a result of the method of distribution?</b></p>	<p>This method of distribution will support the State’s 2023 Annual Action Plan goals in housing, economic development, and public facilities and services. With the FFY23 allocation of approximately \$7.3 million, the VCDP expects to create 43 rental units and 2 homeowner units, rehabilitate 44 rental units and 100 homeowner units, create or retain 30 jobs and assist 2 businesses, and serve approximately 4,640 Vermonters through public facility and service activities.</p>

**CDBG FFY2023 DISTRIBUTION PLAN**

	FY2023 Allocation
FFY 2023 CDBG Annual HUD Award	\$7,334,647
Anticipated FFY 2023 Program Income*	\$ 200,000
<b>Total Available</b>	<b>\$7,534,647</b>

**CDBG Allocations Based on FFY 2023 Annual HUD Award and Program Income**

Implementation Grants (IG) (Includes Planning Grant Target of \$360,000, Recovery Housing Target of \$500,000 and Special Housing Projects Pilot up to \$750,000)	\$3,847,482
Scattered Site Grants (SS-HRLF) – Housing Revolving Loan Fund set-aside (1)	\$2,567,126
Accessibility Modifications Grants (AM) set-aside (1)	\$ 600,000
Anticipated Program Income	\$ 200,000
<b>Total State Administration</b>	<b>\$ 320,039</b>
• 2% \$146,693	
• \$100,000	
• + 1%TA \$73,346	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7, 534,647</b>

(1) FFY2020 SS & AM any remaining funds available at the time of the last funding round during the period of July 1, 2023, through June 1, 2024, may be awarded to Implementation and Planning Grants.

NOTE: Allocations are estimated based on the State’s FFY 2023 Award.

- \*Program Income (PI) estimate based on amounts expected.
- Funds will be allocated so that each funding cycle will have funds to award.
- The Agency reserves the right to adjust fund categories by up to \$100,000.
- Recaptured funds will be reallocated as soon as feasible.
- SS set-aside is up to 35% of VCDP’s annual FFY allocation.
  - SS-HRLF set-aside is limited to up to 15% of its total annual allocation for counseling activities

**Program Limitations**

Public Service Limitation (15% of total allocation)	\$1,100,197
Federal 20% Cap for state & local general administration and all planning activities	\$1,466,929
• Cap for state & local general administration (IG & AM) and all planning activities	\$1,158,874
• SS-HRLF set-aside is limited to up to 12% of its total annual allocation for general administration	\$ 308,055
Limit on Slums & Blight and Urgent Need (13% of Total)	\$ 953,504

## CDBG Grant Types, Funding Limits, and Match Requirements

	Implementation (IG)	Scattered Site (SS-HRLF)	Planning (PG)	Accessibility Modification (AM)	Multi-year Funding Implementation	Disaster Assistance
<b>Annual Allocation</b>						
	\$4,047,482 includes \$200,000 Program Income	Minimum \$2,567,126 <sup>1</sup>	Target amount of \$360,000	Minimum \$600,000	No amount reserved	Disaster Specific
<b>Funding Limits</b>						
Maximum	\$1,000,000 <sup>2</sup>	Annual Allocation is based on performance	\$60,000	\$150,000	\$1,250,000 <sup>3</sup>	Disaster Specific
Minimum	\$50,000		\$3,000	\$5,000	\$250,000	
<b>Match Requirements</b>						
	10% of VCDP Funds in cash or cash-in-kind for ADA and Slums & Blight; which must be applied to remediating the S&B condition.	10% of VCDP Funds in cash or cash-in-kind.	10% of VCDP Funds in cash or cash-in-kind.	10% of VCDP Funds in cash or cash-in-kind.	10% of VCDP Funds in cash or cash-in-kind for ADA and Slums & Blight; which must be applied to remediating the S&B condition.	
	Please see the VCDP Program Guide at: <a href="http://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/vcdp/applicant-guidance">http://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/funding-incentives/vcdp/applicant-guidance</a> for a detailed description of the program including; grant types, selection criteria, match requirements, funding levels and application instructions.					

<sup>1</sup> SS & AM funds not awarded by June 1 may be awarded to Implementation and Planning Grants.

<sup>2</sup> Maximum funding limit for community public facility and public service projects is \$500,000. If a public facility project is in support of transitional housing the maximum funding limit is \$1,000,000.

<sup>3</sup> No more than \$750,000 can be forward committed for multi-year projects.

## **AP-35 Projects – (Optional)**

### **Introduction:**

Not applicable to State Action Plans. This is where the State of Vermont will add its Projects for the 2023 program year.

#	Project Name

**Table 9 – Project Information**

### **Describe the reasons for allocation priorities and any obstacles to addressing underserved needs**

Refer to AP-25 Allocation Priorities and AP-85 Other Actions - Obstacles to addressing underserved needs.



**AP-40 Section 108 Loan Guarantee – 91.320(k)(1)(ii)**

**Will the state help non-entitlement units of general local government to apply for Section 108 loan funds?**

No

**Available Grant Amounts**

N/A

**Acceptance process of applications**

N/A

**AP-45 Community Revitalization Strategies – 91.320(k)(1)(ii)**

**Will the state allow units of general local government to carry out community revitalization strategies?**

No

**State’s Process and Criteria for approving local government revitalization strategies**

N/A

## **AP-50 Geographic Distribution – 91.320(f)**

### **Description of the geographic areas of the state (including areas of low-income and minority concentration) where assistance will be directed**

In keeping with the State’s long-standing policy, the State does not plan to target assistance to specific geographic regions. CDBG, HOME, and HTF funds will be allocated on a competitive basis to locally-driven projects that address priority needs.

ESG funds are awarded as part of the statewide Housing Opportunity Grant Program (HOP). Awards are made on a competitive basis according to local needs.

### **Geographic Distribution**

<b>Target Area</b>	<b>Percentage of Funds</b>

**Table 10 - Geographic Distribution**

### **Rationale for the priorities for allocating investments geographically**

N/A - Vermont does not allocate investments geographically.

## Affordable Housing

### AP-55 Affordable Housing – 24 CFR 91.320(g)

**Introduction:**

Each year, Vermont strives to provide as many affordable housing units as possible through production of new units, rehabilitation of existing units and preservation of subsidized units at risk of loss. However, the reality is the HUD funding provided to Vermont through CDBG, HOME, and HTF (approximately \$9.4 million) is not enough on its own to significantly address the affordable housing need in the state. The number of affordable housing units created or rehabilitated is much more dependent on the investments of Low Income Housing Tax Credits and access to other affordable housing investments. The State will use CDBG, HOME, and HTF to leverage these resources, and ESG will provide tenant-based rental assistance / rapid rehousing to homeless households.

<b>One Year Goals for the Number of Households to be Supported</b>	
Homeless	280
Non-Homeless	217
Special-Needs	0
Total	497

**Table 11 - One Year Goals for Affordable Housing by Support Requirement**

<b>One Year Goals for the Number of Households Supported Through</b>	
Rental Assistance	250
The Production of New Units	77
Rehab of Existing Units	170
Acquisition of Existing Units	0
Total	497

**Table 12 - One Year Goals for Affordable Housing by Support Type**

**Discussion:**

Note: If funds are reduced these goals will be adjusted proportionally according to the allocation priorities outlines in this plan.

## **AP-60 Public Housing - 24 CFR 91.320(j)**

### **Introduction:**

Vermont's Public Housing Authorities continue to operate in an extremely challenging housing environment. Escalating rental costs and the lack of housing stock are impeding the ability of PHA's to fully utilize housing choice vouchers. Voucher success rates have fallen to an unprecedented 22% while the average rental assistance payment has increased 21% in the last five years.

Federal funding to support the programs administered by Public Housing Authorities continues to be generous. During calendar year 2022, Vermont PHA's received a combined \$63.24 million to support housing choice voucher programs, of which \$62.9 million was provided in rental assistance benefits supporting a combined 7,365 households.

On December 20, 2022, Congressional leaders released a final fiscal year (FY) 2023 omnibus spending bill that includes significant funding for HUD's housing and homelessness programs. Overall, the final spending bill provides HUD programs with \$61.8 billion, or \$8.1 billion more than FY22-enacted levels.

While the final FY23 spending bill provides meaningful increases for vital HUD programs, far more resources are needed to address the nation's growing affordable housing and homelessness crisis.

Even in this environment, none of Vermont's PHA's are considered troubled, and many are rated as high performing.

### **Actions planned during the next year to address the needs to public housing**

The Commissioner of DHCD will continue to review PHA plans that are submitted, to certify the Plans' consistency with the State's Consolidated Plan. Additionally, the executive directors of the Montpelier Housing Authority and the Vermont State Housing Authority are members of the Department's Consolidated Plan Advisory Board, and a representative of the public housing authorities serves on the Vermont Housing Council. PHA's are eligible for CDBG funds through their municipalities.

### **Actions to encourage public housing residents to become more involved in management and participate in homeownership**

The Vermont State Housing Authority administers public housing funds in the form of rental assistance - the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program. VSHA does not own or operate traditional Public Housing. In Vermont, this is done exclusively by the eight local housing authorities.

VSHA's Section 8 funding includes a homeownership program for first-time homebuyers, a project-based voucher program and a variety of special purpose programs. VSHA has operated its Section 8

Homeownership program since 1999.

Each PHA in Vermont has at least one voucher participant or public housing resident serving on the PHA Board of Commissioners. This is to ensure residents have a voice on the governance/administration of Vermont's PHAs. In addition, each PHA in Vermont has organized a Resident Advisory Board to assist in the development of each PHA's Annual Agency Plan. This ensures that residents have an adequate involvement in management.

Winooski Housing Authority has a Homeownership Program whereby Housing Choice Voucher Program clients may utilize their housing assistance to provide debt service on home mortgages. Clients who qualify must undergo Home Ownership Counseling prior to the purchase of a home.

**If the PHA is designated as troubled, describe the manner in which financial assistance will be provided or other assistance**

N/A - None of Vermont's PHA's are designated as troubled.

## **AP-65 Homeless and Other Special Needs Activities – 91.320(h)**

### **Introduction**

This section lays out Vermont's one-year goals and actions for reducing and ending homelessness in the state.

### **Describe the jurisdictions one-year goals and actions for reducing and ending homelessness including**

#### **Reaching out to homeless persons (especially unsheltered persons) and assessing their individual needs**

Vermont provides outreach to homeless persons through a network of local agencies, including shelters, service agencies and housing providers. United Way 2-1-1 provides a one-stop resource and referral point for all persons.

The PATH Program provides assistance to several Vermont organizations to conduct outreach efforts to people experiencing a serious mental illness or a co-occurring substance use disorder. PATH is funded by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and administered in Vermont by the AHS Department of Mental Health.

#### **Addressing the emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless persons**

The State of Vermont leverages resources to address the needs of homeless individuals and families. These resources include those for prevention, rapid re-housing, transitional housing, and shelter operations. The statewide network of local emergency shelters, including shelters for victims of domestic and sexual violence, are often full in winter months and many have developed “overflow” capacity. Additional shelter beds are available seasonally through warming shelters in communities with increased need. When shelters are full, AHS’s Department for Children and Families pays for emergency motel stays for homeless persons who are in a vulnerable population, including elders, people with disabilities, families with children, and victims of domestic violence. As part of a larger strategy to address COVID-19, capacity was reduced at shelters and many seasonal shelters did not open. Utilization of motel stays has been expanded to provide non-congregate options to Vermonters in need.

Member agencies of Vermont’s Coalition of Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs provide emergency and transitional housing services to youth through the Runaway and Family Stabilization and Transitional Living Programs with funding from the US Department of Health & Human Services, and with support from AHS.

#### **Helping homeless persons (especially chronically homeless individuals and families, families**

**with children, veterans and their families, and unaccompanied youth) make the transition to permanent housing and independent living, including shortening the period of time that individuals and families experience homelessness, facilitating access for homeless individuals and families to affordable housing units, and preventing individuals and families who were recently homeless from becoming homeless again**

Through AHS and local Continuums of Care, Vermont is actively engaged in developing multiple programs and strategies to shorten the duration of homelessness, ensure that people are stable after receiving assistance, and support homeless persons moving into permanent housing as rapidly as possible. ESG funds are specifically targeted to support Rapid Re-housing programs. In addition to ESG, state-funded resources include:

- The Vermont Rental Subsidy program, providing 12 months of rental assistance to formerly homeless families and individuals. Administered by AHS Department for Children and Families;
- AHS OEO administers Family Supportive Housing Program linking intensive supportive services and affordable housing to families with children experiencing homelessness, especially families with multiple episodes of homelessness.
- AHS OEO administers the consolidated Housing Opportunity Grant Program (HOP), which includes state funded short-term supported housing, rapid rehousing services, transitional housing for youth, victims of Domestic Violence and Veterans.

Vermont has a strong relationship with the Veterans Administration's grant per diem program to provide emergency shelter to veterans. Funding through the VA Supportive Services for Veterans Families supports various initiatives statewide to provide prevention and re-housing assistance. These projects are coordinated with local Continuums of Care.

Additionally, Vermont has established, through an Executive Order entitled "Publicly Funded Housing for the Homeless", a goal that at least 15% of all housing portfolios that have received publicly controlled development funds be available and serving households exiting homelessness. After enacting the so-called "15% Goal", the Department of Housing and Community Development led a group of stakeholders in the creation of the Housing Access Reporting Tool (HART) for the use of housing developers and managers to report on their progress towards this goal. In addition to the quantification of the number of units that are serving households experiencing homelessness at the time of application to the unit, the HART also includes information about collaborations between housing providers and the local Continua of Care organizations. This annual report is to be reviewed by funders at the time of grant application and is intended to increase collaboration between housing providers and homeless service providers. Since implementation in 2016, the HART reports have demonstrated success in encouraging communication between shelter providers and permanent housing providers about the needs of households experiencing homelessness.

**Helping low-income individuals and families avoid becoming homeless, especially extremely**



**low-income individuals and families and those who are: being discharged from publicly funded institutions and systems of care (such as health care facilities, mental health facilities, foster care and other youth facilities, and corrections programs and institutions); or, receiving assistance from public or private agencies that address housing, health, social services, employment, education, or youth needs**

Vermont leverages state resources to divert low-income individuals and families from homelessness. In addition to homelessness prevention activities funded under the OEO Housing Opportunity Grant Program, the following initiatives address discharge from publicly funded institutions and systems of care:

- The Vermont Coalition of Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs with AHS Department for Children & Families funding and partnerships ensure persons being discharged from the foster care system are not routinely discharged into homelessness and are accessing mainstream resources, including the Housing Choice Voucher Program and Family Unification Vouchers for youth in transition.
- The AHS DMH-funded Mental Health Subsidy & Care program, modeled on HUD Shelter plus Care, funds housing vouchers paired with service supports for homeless persons in higher levels of care settings, such as hospitals, who are ready for discharge.
- The AHS Department of Corrections (DOC) ensures persons being discharged from the corrections system of care are not routinely discharged into homelessness. If suitable permanent housing in the community cannot be located for a person exiting Corrections, DOC utilizes a comprehensive statewide system of transitional housing to ensure that persons are not routinely discharged into homelessness.

## **Discussion**

Vermont promotes supported housing integrated into non-specialized residential buildings or settings. This strategy is aided by promotion of universal design through the State qualified allocation plan, as well as mixed-income housing achieved through project and tenant-based rental assistance and on-site supportive services customized to a client's needs.

The Support and Services at Home (SASH) program provides on-site supportive and coordination services to older Vermonters with disabilities through a statewide network of designated regional housing organizations (DRHOs). SASH services are funded primarily through Vermont's Blueprint for Health and State grant funds from the Department of Disabilities Aging and Independent Living.

Persons with disabilities have access to an array of housing and housing supports, with an emphasis on the least restrictive community setting and maximum consumer choice. In Vermont, Housing Choice (Section 8) rental assistance has been effectively targeted to persons with mental, physical, or developmental disabilities. Unfortunately, Vermont had not been awarded Section 811 Project-Based

Rental Assistance to make rental housing affordable to more non-elderly persons with disabilities.

Beyond accessing the appropriate level of residential or outpatient treatment, persons with alcohol or other Substance Use Disorders can access a limited number of transitional housing beds or recovery housing programs supported through grants from the AHS, Department of Health, Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention.

In addition to the federal HOPWA program, persons with HIV/AIDS can access targeted state-funded rental subsidies and emergency financial assistance to prevent eviction or secure stable housing. This funding comes from the AHS Department of Health. Emergency Rental Assistance is delivered through one of three local AIDS Service Organizations (ASOs), and short-term rental assistance is delivered through the Vermont State Housing Authority (VSHA).

## **AP-75 Barriers to affordable housing – 91.320(i)**

### **Introduction:**

DHCD, AHS, and VHCBC and its housing partners, will continue efforts to lower the barriers to affordable housing identified in the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan and below. Specific actions to be taken in the 2023 program year include:

- In coordination with VHFA, VHCBC and housing developers, examine operating costs of projects with and without services and create benchmarks for use in development and funding decisions.
- In coordination with VHFA and VHCBC, analyze timelines for funding applications and decisions to identify opportunities to reduce the administrative cost and cost of land holding for applicants.
- Provide technical assistance to developers and communities about neighborhood development areas and work with regulatory agencies on reducing permitting requirements outlined in Act 250 for our Designated Areas.
- DHCD will continue to respond to complaints and concerns about conditions in mobile home parks using the authority granted by the legislature in 2015 and the rules promulgated in 2016.
- Promote fair housing by conducting trainings to promote affirmatively furthering fair housing and supporting efforts to provide landlord-tenant education programming.
- DHCD will engage in community outreach activities including a statewide survey and community meetings / focus groups to update the AFFH Plan this year and is planning a full rewrite to be completed for the next 5-year Consolidated Plan in 2024.
- Participate and ensure housing, particularly in vulnerable populations, is included in resilience and disaster preparedness efforts.

### **Actions it planned to remove or ameliorate the negative effects of public policies that serve as barriers to affordable housing such as land use controls, tax policies affecting land, zoning ordinances, building codes, fees and charges, growth limitations, and policies affecting the return on residential investment**

In the 2023 program year, the State will undertake the following actions to address barriers to affordable housing.

Limited public resources, particularly decreasing funding for development, preservation, services, and subsidies that support affordable housing.

1. Promote the State's commitment to perpetual affordability.
2. Maximize leveraging and seek ways to reduce operating and development costs.
3. Support the continuation and expansion of the State affordable housing, downtown and historic tax credits.
4. Support State resources for affordable housing such as rental subsidy programs, homelessness assistance and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund.
5. Consider per unit development costs in funding applications

6. Consider utilization of underutilized resources such as the State's Private Activity Bond Cap and/or "4%" Low Income Housing Tax Credits

Increasing standards for energy efficiency.

1. While supporting the State's energy goals, ensure a robust analysis of costs is considered in the development of State energy-efficiency standards and building codes.
2. Seek expanded and new sources of funding for energy improvements in both publicly supported and private single and multi-family housing.

State and local land use controls.

1. Continue to review State and local land use programs and policies for ways to strengthen environmental protection while reducing unnecessary barriers to residential development, particularly affordable housing.
2. Encourage and promote development and growth in Designated Downtowns and Village Centers, Growth Centers, Neighborhood Development Areas, and New Town Centers.
3. Provide technical assistance to municipalities to review and reform outdated and exclusionary land use restrictions.

Permitting processes and community development standards.

1. Provide technical assistance to communities, developers and property owners seeking to provide affordable housing.
2. Provide technical assistance and funding to municipalities around zoning and land use planning.
3. Promote exemptions and streamlining of State permitting processes in areas designated for growth.

Limited funding to promote Fair Housing and address discrimination in rental and sales market housing markets.

1. Continue collaboration through the Fair Housing Committee of the Vermont Housing Council to undertake the actions recommended in 2017 Analysis of Impediments.
2. DHCD will engage in community outreach activities including a statewide survey and community meetings / focus groups to update the AFFH Plan and is planning a full rewrite to be completed for the next 5-year Consolidated Plan in 2024.
3. Support efforts of the Vermont Human Rights Commission, the Fair Housing Project, Vermont Legal Aid, and others to secure additional funding for fair housing activities.
4. Work with landlord and tenant organizations to increase awareness of State and federal housing law and ensure the rights and responsibilities of both are appropriately balanced in changes to State statutes.

Federal funding regulatory requirements such as the National Environmental Policy Act, Davis-Bacon and procurement standards.

1. Continue to provide technical assistance and update guidance to grantees as requirements expand and change.

2. Access and seek additional training opportunities for State administrators and grantees.

Provide federal funding and regulatory agencies with information on the benefits and challenges of statutory and regulatory requirements and recommendations for improvements.

## **AP-85 Other Actions – 91.320(j)**

### **Introduction:**

This section describes actions that will be pursued in addition to the actions described elsewhere in this plan.

### **Actions planned to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs**

During the 2020 Outreach Meetings, several needs were identified that were not raised in previous Consolidated Plan updates, including the growing need for more affordable childcare as well as the need for decent, safe, and affordable housing for agricultural farm workers. Actions taken or planned to address these concerns include:

In 2021, VHCB released their Farm Worker Housing Needs Assessment which estimated the nature and scale of farm worker housing needs in Vermont for the roughly 2,000 agricultural workers who live on premises and made recommendations on how these can be addressed. Following an RFP process, the University of Vermont Extension and Champlain Housing Trust initiated the Vermont Farmworker Housing Repair Loan Program which provides 0% interest loans up to \$30,000 to eligible farmers to make essential repairs and necessary improvements to their farm worker housing.

In addition, DHCD intends to continue investments in housing affordable to low- and moderate-income households and will encourage applications from municipalities that have high levels of agricultural activity to address the needs of community members who are employed in area farm work.

Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting stay-home orders underscored the need for broadband access, small business support, and the need for additional housing. All of these issues received considerable funding support from the CARES Act funds granted to the State of Vermont but will need to be considered ongoing needs as the nation continues to transition away from an emergency response to a more sustained recovery effort.

### **Actions planned to foster and maintain affordable housing**

The Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA) maintains a detailed list of all assisted housing projects in the state, including those without perpetual affordability covenants. VHFA works proactively, in conjunction with other State agencies and organizations as needed, to ensure that affordability contracts are renewed, and housing assistance is maintained. The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board also hosts the Preservation Council, a group of housing agency representatives, which strategizes and prioritizes efforts throughout the state to preserve existing affordable housing. These efforts will continue over the next year and into the foreseeable future to preserve housing affordability.

### **Actions planned to reduce lead-based paint hazards**

Vermont's ongoing activities to reduce lead-based paint hazards in housing, eliminate childhood lead poisoning, and integrate lead poisoning prevention and home health and safety efforts into affordable housing programs include:

1. Continue to implement activities of the state-wide Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Grant Program in the private housing stock, administered by the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board; and implementation of a HUD-funded Lead Hazard Control Program in Burlington.
2. Continue to implement activities of the State and community-based Healthy & Lead Safe Homes Program, administered by the Vermont Department of Health through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC).
3. Implement the recommendations of the 2008 Get the Lead Out of Vermont Task Force.
4. Continue to implement provisions of Act 94 (an Act Relating to Childhood Lead Poisoning Screening and Lead Hazard Abatement), passed by the Vermont General Assembly in 1993.
5. Continue to develop and implement appropriate recommendations of Act 94 (passed in 1993) and Act 165 (passed 1996), including the development of financial strategies for lead hazard reduction in future years; and pursue further legislative action to reduce lead paint hazards. The Vermont Legislature is currently considering a bill that will have the State take over administration of the Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) Rule and integrate it into Vermont's lead paint laws'
6. Administer HUD funds received in 2022 to address the on-going need for lead-based paint hazard reduction in thousands of Vermont housing units.
7. Maintain regular contact with the National Center for Healthy Housing (formerly the National Center for Lead Safe Housing).
8. Continue participation on the New England Lead Coordinating Committee, convened by the Tufts University School of Medicine and the University of Connecticut.
9. Evaluate and amend policies of the Vermont Housing Finance Agency and the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board regarding lead-based paint, health, safety, or toxic and hazardous materials, as appropriate.
10. Coordinate procedures with the Department of Health, the Vermont State Housing Authority and local Public Housing Authorities regarding childhood poisoning in owned and assisted units, as needed.
11. Continue to build a database in the Department of Health regarding incidences of childhood lead poisoning and presence of lead hazards in housing stock.
12. Coordinate lead hazard reduction efforts with activities of the State Office of Economic Opportunity Weatherization Assistance Program in low-income housing units.
13. Continue public information, education, and outreach efforts.
14. Continue to develop public and private financial resources for lead-based paint hazard control activities in Vermont's housing stock.
15. Coordinate with the Department of Health and affordable housing funders and developers in implementing the Healthy Homes strategic plan promoted by HUD and promote the incorporation of healthy homes principles into ongoing practices and programs.
16. Coordinate efforts with all housing groups, agencies, and stake-holders to create sustainable delivery of healthy homes services to reduce health and safety hazards in housing in a comprehensive and cost-effective manner, with a focus on protecting the health of children and other sensitive populations in low-income households.

17. Continue coordination and collaboration among health, housing, and historic preservation agencies and interest groups.

### **Actions planned to reduce the number of poverty-level families**

One in ten Vermonters live in poverty. Children are more likely than adults to live in poverty or in deep poverty (below 50% of the poverty threshold). The Agency of Human Services (AHS) supports households living in poverty while serving those who earn more than the threshold but still struggle to afford housing, transportation, health care, childcare, and other essentials.

AHS and primarily the Department for Children and Families (DCF) aim to reduce the number of families living in poverty. Reach Up is Vermont's Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program which provides cash assistance, case management, and support services to families whose income is generally below 50% of the Federal Poverty Level. Reach Up and related programs are critical to alleviating poverty. These programs provide nearly 6,100 Vermont children and their families with income to help provide basic needs. DCF- Office of Economic Opportunity manages grants to make housing more affordable and prevent homelessness among vulnerable Vermonters.

Below is a list of some of DCF's most effective anti-poverty program investments:

- **Family Supportive Housing** is an evidence-informed model that provides permanent housing and intensive case management and financial empowerment support to families who have experienced homelessness and are at-risk of child welfare involvement. Families served by FSH tend to have high rates of housing stability (66-82% over the last five years) and most families close their child welfare case during enrollment and do not have a new case after they exit.
- **Fuel Assistance- The Seasonal Fuel Assistance Program** helps low-income families pay a portion of their home heating bills. Assistance is for homeowners or renters who pay for heat or who have heat included in the rent. The **Crisis Fuel Program-Emergency Fuel Program** is available for families with monthly gross income up to 200% of poverty level.
- **Financial Empowerment Program** Reach Up case managers use "*Your Money, Your Goals*" toolkit to help Reach Up recipients address financial barriers.
- **Reach Up Car Ownership Program** Reach Up purchases used cars for families through Good News Garage and other state agencies and assists through down payment assistance.
- **The Child Care Financial Assistance Program** helps eligible families with the cost of childcare. Payments are made directly to childcare providers and is provided through DCF-Child Development Division.
- **Help Me Grow** helps early childhood partners work together to build strong, connected communities and healthy, resilient families. Help Me Grow builds families' and service providers' understanding of early development, promotes the importance of social and emotional skill development, and connects children to the community resources and supports they need, when they need them.

AHS works closely with the State's affordable housing community to ensure that the lowest income families in Vermont can access quality housing. The regional housing non-profits were encouraged through Vermont State Executive Order No. 3-73 to "make available at least 15% of their housing portfolio to homeless families and individuals including those with special needs...". AHS provides



direction to the new projects that are funded through participation in the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, prioritizing units for the lowest income Vermonters.

### **Actions planned to develop institutional structure**

1. Continue to encourage closer coordination between housing and human service providers, particularly with the Agency of Human Services, to better serve our lowest income population; and continue coordination with the Department of Labor to ensure that unemployed or under-employed Vermonters are connected to progressive employment programs.
2. Continue to require Economic Development Projects with job creation elements to enter into a hiring agreement with the Department of Labor career resource center.
3. Continue to encourage closer communication with the Agency of Transportation to encourage integrated transportation systems that link housing with jobs and services.
4. The Public Transit Administrator in the Agency of Transportation will continue to review CDBG applications and provide comment when there are elements that relate to the use of or access to public transportation.
5. Continue efforts to simplify and to coordinate application requirements for various funding sources including quarterly meetings between DHCD, VHCB, and VHFA to discuss varying funding priorities and timelines.
6. Streamline service delivery and enhance local effectiveness by continuing to build and enhance the capacity of community-based homeless assistance providers and nonprofit housing providers.

### **Actions planned to enhance coordination between public and private housing and social service agencies**

Continue, through the Department's leadership of the Housing Council, formation of State policy, to assist housing providers, State agencies, such as the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, (VHCB), Vermont State Housing Authority (VSHA), and others to ensure the availability of safe and affordable housing for all Vermonters.

# Program Specific Requirements

## AP-90 Program Specific Requirements – 91.320(k)(1,2,3)

### Introduction:

As reported throughout this plan, the State will strive to; increase the supply and quality of affordable housing, decrease the number of persons experiencing homelessness, create and retain jobs, strengthen communities, and improve the quality of life for all Vermonters. CDBG, HOME, HTF, and ESG funding are often leveraged with other funds to maximize the available resources.

Specific priorities and goals for CDBG, HOME, HTF, and ESG funding are identified in the annual goals and objectives contained in this plan.

### Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) Reference 24 CFR 91.320(k)(1)

Projects planned with all CDBG funds expected to be available during the year are identified in the Projects Table. The following identifies program income that is available for use that is included in projects to be carried out.

1. The total amount of program income that will have been received before the start of the next program year and that has not yet been reprogrammed	200,000
2. The amount of proceeds from section 108 loan guarantees that will be used during the year to address the priority needs and specific objectives identified in the grantee's strategic plan.	0
3. The amount of surplus funds from urban renewal settlements	0
4. The amount of any grant funds returned to the line of credit for which the planned use has not been included in a prior statement or plan	0
5. The amount of income from float-funded activities	0
<b>Total Program Income:</b>	<b>0</b>

### Other CDBG Requirements

1. The amount of urgent need activities	953,504
2. The estimated percentage of CDBG funds that will be used for activities that benefit persons of low and moderate income. Overall Benefit - A consecutive period of one, two or three years may be used to determine that a minimum overall benefit of 70% of CDBG funds is used to benefit persons of low and moderate income. Specify the years covered that include this Annual Action Plan.	70.00%

**HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME)**  
**Reference 24 CFR 91.320(k)(2)**

1. A description of other forms of investment being used beyond those identified in Section 92.205 is as follows:

N/A – No other forms of investment will be used.

2. A description of the guidelines that will be used for resale or recapture of HOME funds when used for homebuyer activities as required in 92.254, is as follows:

N/A – Vermont will not be using HOME funds for homebuyer assistance programs.

3. A description of the guidelines for resale or recapture that ensures the affordability of units acquired with HOME funds? See 24 CFR 92.254(a)(4) are as follows:

N/A – Vermont will not be using HOME funds for homebuyer assistance programs.

4. Plans for using HOME funds to refinance existing debt secured by multifamily housing that is rehabilitated with HOME funds along with a description of the refinancing guidelines required that will be used under 24 CFR 92.206(b), are as follows:

Multi-family projects developed by locally based housing organizations that receive HOME funds for rehabilitation may utilize HOME funds to refinance existing debt consistent with 24 CFR 92.206(b)(2), if they meet the following guidelines:

- Refinancing is necessary to permit or to continue affordability under section 92.252;
- Rehabilitation is the primary eligible activity. A minimum of \$7,500 of rehabilitation per unit is required;
- The grantee must demonstrate that disinvestment in the property has not occurred;
- The grantee must demonstrate management capacity and practices that ensure that the long term needs of the project can be met and the targeted population can be served over an extended affordability period;
- The grantee must demonstrate that the new investment is being made to maintain current affordable units, to create greater affordability in current affordable units, or to create additional affordable units;
- Refinancing will be limited to projects that have previously received an investment of public funds;
- The minimum HOME affordability period shall be 15 years and all HOME assisted projects are required to be perpetually affordable via a VHCB Housing Subsidy Covenant;
- HOME funds may be used for refinancing anywhere in the State of Vermont with the exception of the City of Burlington;
- HOME funds cannot be used to refinance multifamily loans made or insured by any Federal program, including CDBG.

**Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)  
Reference 91.320(k)(3)**

1. Include written standards for providing ESG assistance (may include as attachment)

See Vermont's HOP - Standards for Provisions of Assistance. The State requires that all ESG grantees submit to the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) written standards (policies and procedures) for providing ESG assistance. OEO approves only those standards that are in compliance with ESG regulations and are consistent with state and federal goals.

2. If the Continuum of Care has established centralized or coordinated assessment system that meets HUD requirements, describe that centralized or coordinated assessment system.

Both the Chittenden County CoC and the Balance of State CoC adopted coordinated entry policies and procedures in January 2018. OEO participates in the Chittenden County CoC coordinated entry committee and chairs the Balance of State CoC coordinated entry committee. OEO is also the recipient of HUD CoC Coordinated Entry project funds, which it pairs with state funding to support implementation in the Balance of State. All ESG grantees are required to participate in the coordinated entry system in their region.

Both coordinated entry systems incorporate a screening form to assist a range of partners with making a referral for homeless assistance and a uniform housing assessment tool, which evaluates severity of service need and/or vulnerability in order to support prioritization of scarce resources. In Chittenden County, the assessment form is varied for subpopulations of single adults, families, youth, and victims of domestic violence. Both CoCs use a hybrid model which includes partner agencies serving as a hub or an assessment partner, and both use HMIS and a master list review process. 2-1-1 provides access to coordinated entry across the geographic area.

3. Identify the process for making sub-awards and describe how the ESG allocation available to private nonprofit organizations (including community and faith-based organizations).

OEO administers the Emergency Solutions Grants program (ESG) as part of the Housing Opportunity Grant Program (HOP). The Housing Opportunity Grant Program blends federal and state funding to help nonprofit organizations, including community and faith-based organizations; provide emergency overnight and day shelter; provide transitional housing where appropriate; offer supportive services for homeless families and individuals; and implement effective homeless prevention and rapid re-housing initiatives within the local continua of care. Vermont has chosen to allocate ESG resources towards Emergency Shelter (Operations and Essential Services), HMIS and Rapid Re-housing (medium-term Rental Assistance). Other activities, such as Street Outreach, Shelter Renovation, Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Services will be funded through other funding sources and coordinated locally and/or as part of the consolidated Housing Opportunity Grant Program.

In April 2023, OEO will release a Request for Proposals for the Housing Opportunity Grant Program (which includes ESG program funds). Recipients of State Fiscal Year 2023 (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023) funds will be considered for SFY 2024 funding, with the option for applicants to submit

requests adjusting projects and/or funding. Current awards (SFY 2023) were reviewed and evaluated by AHS OEO based on local need, capacity, approach, and local coordination.

Eligible applicants are municipalities and nonprofits including community and faith-based organizations. Faith-based organizations are required to have separate 501c3 status established to meet eligibility requirements. Part of the selection process can involve a site visit of the finalists at which time documentation listed in the application will be reviewed. All Emergency Shelter applicants must certify that the assisted property will be maintained as an Emergency Shelter for the period of funded assistance. New applicants, and applicants who have recently relocated their operations to another municipality, must submit a completed Certification of Local Government Approval with their application. Vermont makes ESG sub awards under the Housing Opportunity Grant Program. One or more grants will be awarded by OEO to Vermont municipalities, or, with municipal approval, Vermont nonprofits whose purpose is to shelter, serve, and re-house the homeless. All sub awards are made on the State Fiscal Year calendar (July 1 – June 30). Please see the Methods of Distribution for selection criteria.

Spending plans will be negotiated based on ineligible activities, where activities are not in alignment with state and federal goals, when there are inadequate funds to meet all requests, and/or where proposed grantees are either ineligible or lack the capacity to carry out proposed activities. Additional guidance on eligible and ineligible uses of ESG funds are contained in the Department of Housing and Urban Development's ESG program guidelines, the Request for Proposal and in grant agreements between the state of Vermont and its subrecipients. This includes the ESG requirements for faith-based organizations.

4. If the jurisdiction is unable to meet the homeless participation requirement in 24 CFR 576.405(a), the jurisdiction must specify its plan for reaching out to and consulting with homeless or formerly homeless individuals in considering policies and funding decisions regarding facilities and services funded under ESG.

N/A. The Grantee is a State and not subject to § 576.405(a).

5. Describe performance standards for evaluating ESG.

Performance measures will be evaluated on both the grantee and statewide level. In addition to measuring the number of persons and families in emergency shelter, the number of shelter bed nights provided, the number of households receiving rapid rehousing assistance – Vermont uses performance-based contracting, outcome measures, indicators and targets, consistent with the goal of decreasing the incidence and duration of homelessness. OEO tracks performance measures for grantees quarterly. If a grantee's performance falls below 75% of a stated target, OEO in conjunction with the grantee may require a performance improvement plan. Continued failure to meet performance measures may result in loss of funding or cancellation of the grant agreement. An ability to meet or exceed performance targets will be a consideration for renewal of the grant agreement. Current performance standards for ESG include:

### **Emergency Shelter, Operations**

Maintain shelter facilities that are staffed, insured, and clear of safety violations.

At least 90% of homeless households entering the shelter meet with a case manager or program equivalent within 3 days of shelter entry.

The percentage of households exiting shelter to stable permanent or transitional housing, and the average length of stay.

### **Emergency Shelter, Essential Services - Case Management**

At least 90% of homeless households referred for case management meet with a case manager or program equivalent for intake and assessment within 3 days of referral.

Of those homeless households receiving case management:

- at least 70% subsequently attain employment OR are enrolled in an educational or training program, OR qualify for cash or non-cash benefits (e.g., Reach Up, SSI or General Assistance, VA, 3SquaresVT, etc.) within 90 days of referral;
- at least 70% subsequently are stabilized in transitional or permanent housing within 90 days AND at least 70% of these formerly homeless households continue to be stably housed for at least 90 days.

### **Rapid Re-Housing for Homeless Families & Individuals**

The number and percentage of households who are in stable permanent housing, and the average length of time from project entry until is stabilized. At least 70% of formerly homeless households continue to be stably housed for at least 90 days.

**Housing Trust Fund (HTF)**  
**Reference 24 CFR 91.320(k)(5)**

1. How will the grantee distribute its HTF funds? Select all that apply:

Applications submitted by eligible recipients

2. If distributing HTF funds through grants to subgrantees, describe the method for distributing HTF funds through grants to subgrantees and how those funds will be made available to state agencies and/or units of general local government. If not distributing funds through grants to subgrantees, enter "N/A".

N/A

3. If distributing HTF funds by selecting applications submitted by eligible recipients,

a. Describe the eligibility requirements for recipients of HTF funds (as defined in 24 CFR § 93.2). If not distributing funds by selecting applications submitted by eligible recipients, enter "N/A".

Eligibility to apply for HTF funds will be no more restrictive than required by HTF regulations. Eligible applicants/recipients of HTF funds include nonprofit and for-profit developers, public housing agencies, and municipalities. In accordance with the definition at 24 CFR 93.2, recipients must:

- Make acceptable assurances to the grantee (VHCB) that it will comply with the requirements of the HTF program during the entire period that begins upon selection of the recipient to receive HTF funds, and ending upon the conclusion of all HTF-funded activities;
- Demonstrate the ability and financial capacity to undertake, comply, and manage the eligible activity;
- Demonstrate its familiarity with the requirements of other Federal, State, or local housing programs that may be used in conjunction with HTF funds to ensure compliance with all applicable requirements and regulations of such programs; and,
- Have demonstrated experience and capacity to conduct an eligible HTF activity as evidenced by its ability to own, construct, or rehabilitate, and manage and operate an affordable multifamily rental housing development.

b. Describe the grantee's application requirements for eligible recipients to apply for HTF funds. If not distributing funds by selecting applications submitted by eligible recipients, enter "N/A".

Entities seeking HTF dollars for eligible projects may submit applications for funding to VHCB using the Common Housing Application. A HTF application supplement, available on VHCB's website, must also be completed and submitted to VHCB.

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis, however, funding decisions shall be made by the VHCB Board at regularly scheduled meetings. VHCB board meeting and application due dates are published at [www.vhcb.org](http://www.vhcb.org).



The following threshold criteria must be met by an application to be considered for a HTF award: 1) the project must include the creation or preservation of permanent rental housing (transitional housing and shelters are not eligible), 2) the housing must remain affordable in perpetuity after the expiration of the HTF required period via a VHCB Housing Subsidy Covenant, 3) at least one of the State's Consolidated Plan housing priorities must be addressed, and 4) there must be a reasonable expectation that the project will be ready to proceed within 18 months.

Applications must include a description of the eligible activities to be conducted with the HTF funds in accordance with 24 CFR 93.200 (Eligible activities), and must contain a certification (included in the HTF application supplement) by each eligible recipient that housing units assisted with the HTF will comply with HTF requirements.

All HTF applicants seeking funding for affordable multi-family rental housing (for new units and rehabilitation of existing units) shall describe the plans and tools they have in place to achieve the goal of making available at least 15% of the units in their portfolio to those who are experiencing homeless.

c. Describe the selection criteria that the grantee will use to select applications submitted by eligible recipients. If not distributing funds by selecting applications submitted by eligible recipients, enter "N/A".

### **Selection Criteria**

On a competitive basis, applications that have met the threshold criteria described above will be evaluated according to how and the extent to which they meet the HTF criteria listed below. These criteria will carry equal importance and weight. The HTF criteria, together with the criteria and considerations in the VHCB Affordable Housing Funding Policy and the Underwriting Policy and Procedures will be used to determine "Need," "Impact," and "Quality" scores (up to 10 points each) for a project's funding recommendation to the VHCB Board of Directors.

### **HTF Criteria**

1. The applicant's ability to obligate HTF funds and undertake eligible activities in a timely manner

- Applicants will be evaluated on their development capacity (do they have experienced development staff, are they using a development consultant, are they partnering with another development entity?); their experience with federal affordable housing programs (what other federally-funded affordable housing projects have they developed?); and their track record for developing projects within a reasonable timeframe (were those projects successfully completed in a timely manner?)

2. The extent to which the project has a mechanism or strategy to ensure deep affordability of the HTF units throughout the compliance period so that rents are affordable to extremely low-income families.

- While project-based rental assistance is not a HTF requirement, applications will be evaluated based on whether any of the units in the project, including the HTF units, will have project-based rental assistance to ensure residents do not pay more than 30% of their income towards

rent and utilities. The type of project-based rental assistance and the length of commitment for the assistance will also be considered.

- Other mechanisms that ensure affordability for extremely low-income households, such as cross-subsidization or operating assistance reserves, will be considered.

### 3.The duration of the units' affordability period

- All HTF funded projects will be subject to a minimum 30-year affordability period. Consideration will be given to projects that propose a HTF affordability period greater than the minimum 30 years.
- After the expiration of the HTF period, all projects will be subject to perpetual VHCB affordability requirements at less restrictive income and rent levels, and every reasonable effort must be taken to structure the project in a manner that avoids displacement. The proposed number of VHCB restricted units and the level of the VHCB restrictions will be considered.

### 4.The merits of the application in meeting the priority housing needs as identified in the State's Consolidated Plan; i.e.

safe, decent, affordable housing (increase the supply and quality of affordable housing)

- Does the project increase the supply and quality of affordable housing?
- How many of the following Consolidated Plan Affordable Housing strategies are addressed by the application?

d. Describe the grantee's required priority for funding based on geographic diversity (as defined by the grantee in the consolidated plan). If not distributing funds by selecting applications submitted by eligible recipients, enter "N/A".

N/A - there will be no geographic priority

e. Describe the grantee's required priority for funding based on the applicant's ability to obligate HTF funds and undertake eligible activities in a timely manner. If not distributing funds by selecting applications submitted by eligible recipients, enter "N/A".

The following threshold criteria must be met by an application to be considered for a HTF award:

7. The project must include the creation or preservation of permanent rental housing (transitional housing and shelters are not eligible),
8. The housing must remain affordable in perpetuity after the expiration of the HTF required period via a VHCB Housing Subsidy Covenant,
9. At least one of the State's Consolidated Plan housing priorities must be addressed, and
10. There must be a reasonable expectation that the project will be ready to proceed within 18 months.

f. Describe the grantee's required priority for funding based on the extent to which the rental project has Federal, State, or local project-based rental assistance so that rents are affordable

to extremely low-income families. If not distributing funds by selecting applications submitted by eligible recipients, enter “N/A”.

The extent to which the project has Federal, State, or local project-based rental assistance so that rents are affordable to extremely low-income families

- While project-based rental assistance is not a HTF requirement, applications will be evaluated based on whether any of the units in the project, including the HTF units, will have project-based rental assistance to ensure residents do not pay more than 30% of their income towards rent and utilities. The type of project-based rental assistance and the length of commitment for the assistance will also be considered.
- Other mechanisms that ensure affordability for extremely low-income households, such as cross-subsidization or operating assistance reserves, will be considered.

g. Describe the grantee’s required priority for funding based on the financial feasibility of the project beyond the required 30-year period. If not distributing funds by selecting applications submitted by eligible recipients, enter “N/A”.

The duration of the units' affordability period

- All HTF funded projects will be subject to a minimum 30-year affordability period. Consideration will be given to projects that propose a HTF affordability period greater than the minimum 30 years.
- After the expiration of the HTF period, all projects will be subject to perpetual VHCB affordability requirements at less restrictive income and rent levels, and every reasonable effort must be taken to structure the project in a manner that avoids displacement. The proposed number of VHCB restricted units and the level of the VHCB restrictions will be considered.

h. Describe the grantee’s required priority for funding based on the merits of the application in meeting the priority housing needs of the grantee (such as housing that is accessible to transit or employment centers, housing that includes green building and sustainable development features, or housing that serves special needs populations). If not distributing funds by selecting applications submitted by eligible recipients, enter “N/A”.

The merits of applications in meeting the following priorities is evaluated during the underwriting process:

- Does the project increase the supply and quality of affordable housing?
- How many of the following Consolidated Plan Affordable Housing strategies are addressed by the application?
- House lower income families and individuals, with special preference to projects housing extremely low income families and individuals at or below 30% of area median income.
- Increase the supply of affordable rental housing through the acquisition and/or rehabilitation of existing units especially in communities where there are tight housing markets, very low vacancy rates or there is a high incidence of distressed housing.

- Increase the supply of affordable rental housing through the construction of new units especially in communities where there are tight housing markets, very low vacancy rates or there is a high incidence of distressed housing.
- Promote mixed income developments to create integrated communities.
- Promote the development of new rental housing designed and built to a level of energy efficiency that meets or exceeds the levels required to qualify for the Energy Star label.
- Preserve existing affordable housing projects in a manner consistent with prudent investment criteria.
- Redevelop existing properties with consideration given for projects that leverage other resources specific to the preservation of historic structures.
- Redevelop foreclosed properties for affordable rental housing.
- Provide accessible or adaptable housing for persons with disabilities.
- Provide service enriched housing serving persons with disabilities.
- Produce affordable senior rental units in regions where a market analysis identifies a shortage of elderly housing affordable to lower income seniors.
- Provide service enriched housing that allows seniors the opportunity to age in place.
- Locate affordable rental housing in close proximity to public transportation services with access to employment centers, services, recreational opportunities, and schools.

i. Describe the grantee’s required priority for funding based on the extent to which the application makes use of non-federal funding sources. If not distributing funds by selecting applications submitted by eligible recipients, enter “N/A”.

The extent to which the application makes use of non-federal funding sources

- Does the applicant plan to apply for and/or anticipate a commitment of non-federal sources of funding?
- How much, and from what source(s)?
- What percentage of the total development cost do the non-federal funding sources represent?

4. Does the grantee’s application require the applicant to include a description of the eligible activities to be conducted with HTF funds? If not distributing funds by selecting applications submitted by eligible recipients, select “N/A”.

Yes

5. Does the grantee’s application require that each eligible recipient certify that housing units assisted with HTF funds will comply with HTF requirements? If not distributing funds by selecting applications submitted by eligible recipients, select “N/A”.

Yes

**6. Performance Goals and Benchmarks.** The grantee has met the requirement to provide for performance goals and benchmarks against which the grantee will measure its progress, consistent with the grantee’s goals established under 24 CFR 91.315(b)(2), by including HTF in

its housing goals in the housing table on the SP-45 Goals and AP-20 Annual Goals and Objectives screens.

Yes

#### **7. Maximum Per-unit Development Subsidy Amount for Housing Assisted with HTF Funds.**

Enter or attach the grantee's maximum per-unit development subsidy limits for housing assisted with HTF funds.

The limits must be adjusted for the number of bedrooms and the geographic location of the project. The limits must also be reasonable and based on actual costs of developing non-luxury housing in the area.

If the grantee will use existing limits developed for other federal programs such as the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) per unit cost limits, HOME's maximum per-unit subsidy amounts, and/or Public Housing Development Cost Limits (TDCs), it must include a description of how the HTF maximum per-unit development subsidy limits were established or a description of how existing limits developed for another program and being adopted for HTF meet the HTF requirements specified above.

For FFY22 the maximum per-unit subsidy limits for HTF will again be set at HUD's applicable limits for the HOME Program. They will be applied statewide and are adjusted by the number of bedrooms per unit.

These limits are currently: \$153,314 for 0BRs, \$175,752 for 1BRs, \$213,718 for 2BRs, \$276,482 for 3 BRs, and \$303,490 for 4BRs+.

The decision to use the HOME subsidy limits and apply them statewide is based on an analysis of the actual total development costs of affordable multifamily rental housing properties in Vermont. While there is significant difference in individual project costs, there is relatively little variation in the averages across the State's counties. The averages for the counties with the highest and lowest total development cost per unit both differ by less than 20% compared with the statewide average. The data do not support consistently higher development costs in some geographic areas over others.

Setting the HTF maximum per-unit subsidy limits at the existing HOME limits is allowed by HUD and cost data indicate the use of the HOME limits is appropriate as the initial baseline cap for the amount of HTF investment that may be put into any HTF-assisted unit. However, it is important to note that the cap is not the only mechanism VHCB will use to allocate no more HTF funds than allowable and necessary for project quality and affordability. Each application for HTF funding will be reviewed and analyzed in accordance with VHCB's Policy & Procedures for Project Underwriting, which includes a subsidy layering review. VHCB staff has extensive experience in this area, including through its administration of HOME. The review includes an examination of sources and uses (including any operating or project-based rental assistance) and a determination that all costs are reasonable.

Through its underwriting process, VHCB will ensure that the level of HTF subsidy provided: 1) does not exceed the actual HTF eligible development cost of the unit, 2) that the costs are reasonable and in line with similar projects across the State, 3) the developer is not receiving excessive profit, and 4) HTF

funding does not exceed the amount necessary for the project to be successful for the required 30-year affordability period.

As required by HUD, the HTF maximum subsidy limits will be assessed and adjusted annually as needed.

**8. Rehabilitation Standards.** The grantee must establish rehabilitation standards for all HTF-assisted housing rehabilitation activities that set forth the requirements that the housing must meet upon project completion. The grantee's description of its standards must be in sufficient detail to determine the required rehabilitation work including methods and materials. The standards may refer to applicable codes or they may establish requirements that exceed the minimum requirements of the codes. The grantee must attach its rehabilitation standards below.

In addition, the rehabilitation standards must address each of the following: health and safety; major systems; lead-based paint; accessibility; disaster mitigation (where relevant); state and local codes, ordinances, and zoning requirements; Uniform Physical Condition Standards; and Capital Needs Assessments (if applicable).

VHCB's HTF Rehabilitation Standards shall apply to HTF assisted projects. The standards provide details on what work is required, how that work should be performed (methods), and what materials should be used. The standards refer to applicable codes and in some circumstances establish requirements that exceed the minimum requirements of codes. Methods and materials are specified in some of the incorporated applicable codes referenced on pages 1-2, including International Building Code (IBC). In addition, VHCB's HTF Rehabilitation Standards include language that provides detail on methods and materials.

The rehabilitation standards address the following categories: health and safety; major systems; lead-based paint; accessibility; disaster mitigation; State and local codes, ordinances, and zoning requirements; and inspectable areas and observable deficiencies from HUD's Uniform Physical Condition Standards identified by HUD as applicable to HTF-assisted housing.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate compliance with these standards. If any particular element of the project does not meet the standards, applicants must bring this to the attention of VHCB staff. Waivers may be requested in accordance with VHCB procedures.

**9. Resale or Recapture Guidelines.** Below, the grantee must enter (or attach) a description of the guidelines that will be used for resale or recapture of HTF funds when used to assist first-time homebuyers. If the grantee will not use HTF funds to assist first-time homebuyers, enter "N/A".

N/A

**10. HTF Affordable Homeownership Limits.** If the grantee intends to use HTF funds for homebuyer assistance and does not use the HTF affordable homeownership limits for the area provided by HUD, it must determine 95 percent of the median area purchase price and set forth

the information in accordance with §93.305. If the grantee will not use HTF funds to assist first-time homebuyers, enter “N/A”.

N/A

**11. Grantee Limited Beneficiaries or Preferences.** Describe how the grantee will limit the beneficiaries or give preferences to a particular segment of the extremely low- or very low-income population to serve unmet needs identified in its consolidated plan or annual action plan. If the grantee will not limit the beneficiaries or give preferences to a particular segment of the extremely low- or very low-income population, enter “N/A.”

Any limitation or preference must not violate nondiscrimination requirements in § 93.350, and the grantee must not limit or give preferences to students. The grantee may permit rental housing owners to limit tenants or give a preference in accordance with § 93.303(d)(3) only if such limitation or preference is described in the action plan.

While Vermont’s HTF Program is not limiting beneficiaries to a particular segment of the extremely low-income population, VHCB will give funding preference to projects that include the creation of permanent supportive housing (PSH) with rental assistance and support services for persons who are homeless or at risk for homelessness. VHCB is establishing this preference in accordance with its long term commitment to creating housing for the most vulnerable, the priorities of the State’s Consolidated Plan, results of the most recent Point in Time Count, and HUD’s emphasis on permanent (over transitional) housing. It is also consistent with Vermont’s 2016 Executive Order (No. 03-16) which establishes the following goal: “owners of publicly funded housing [shall] make available at least 15% of their affordable housing portfolio to homeless families and individuals, including those with special needs who require service support and rental assistance to secure and maintain their housing.”

In accordance with the State’s Consolidated Plan guiding principle of “promoting development in State designated downtowns, village centers, neighborhood development areas and other areas that are consistent with the State’s historic settlement pattern and ‘Smart Growth’,” VHCB shall give funding preference to projects located in these areas.

Preference shall also be given to projects that 1) create new units or 2) preserve affordable, subsidized units in properties acquired from private owners.

Owners of housing funded with HTF dollars may (but are not required to) limit occupancy or provide preference to the following populations:

- Homeless families or individuals
- People with disabilities (including people with mental illness)
- Victims of domestic violence
- Frail elders
- Veterans

However, any limitation or preference must not violate the nondiscrimination requirements in the HTF interim rule at 24 CFR 93.350, and the applicant must have affirmative marketing procedures and requirements that apply in the context of the limited/preferred tenant eligibility for the project. Preferences and/or limitations may not be given to students.

**12. Refinancing of Existing Debt.** Enter or attach the grantee’s refinancing guidelines below. The guidelines describe the conditions under which the grantee will refinance existing debt. The grantee’s refinancing guidelines must, at minimum, demonstrate that rehabilitation is the primary eligible activity and ensure that this requirement is met by establishing a minimum level of rehabilitation per unit or a required ratio between rehabilitation and refinancing. If the grantee will not refinance existing debt, enter “N/A.”

Multi-family projects developed by locally based housing organizations that receive HTF funds for rehabilitation may utilize HTF funds to refinance existing debt consistent with 24 CFR 93.201(b) if they meet the following guidelines:

- Refinancing is necessary to reduce the overall housing costs and to make the housing more affordable and proportional to the number of HTF-assisted units in the rental project.
- Rehabilitation is the primary eligible activity. A minimum of \$7,500 of rehabilitation per unit is required. The proportional rehabilitation cost must be greater than the proportional amount of debt that is refinanced;
- The grantee must demonstrate management capacity and practices that ensure that the long term needs of the project can be met and the targeted population can be served over an extended affordability period;
- The grantee must demonstrate that the new investment is being made to maintain current affordable units, to create greater affordability in current affordable units, to create additional affordable units, or to continue the affordability of units that could be lost;
- Refinancing will be limited to projects that have previously received an investment of public funds;
- The minimum HTF affordability period shall be 30 years. All HTF assisted projects are required to remain affordable in perpetuity after the expiration of the HTF required period via a VHCB Housing Subsidy Convent;
- HTF funds may be used for refinancing anywhere in the State of Vermont including the City of Burlington;

HTF funds cannot be used to refinance multifamily loans made or insured by any Federal program, including CDBG.