

Downtown Designation Benefits

The program supports local revitalization efforts across the state by providing technical assistance and state funding to help designated municipalities build strong communities. Once designated, the community will be eligible for the following benefits.

10% Historic Tax Credits

- Available as an add-on to approved Federal Historic Tax Credit projects.
- Eligible costs include interior and exterior improvements, code compliance, plumbing and electrical upgrades.

25% Facade Improvement Tax Credits

- Eligible facade work up to \$25,000.

50% Code Improvement Tax Credits

- Available for up to \$50,000 each for elevators and sprinkler systems and \$12,000 for lifts.
- Eligible code work includes ADA modifications, electrical or plumbing up to \$25,000.

50% Technology Tax Credits

- Available for up to \$30,000 for installation or improvements made to data and network installations, and HVAC (heating, cooling or ventilation systems) reasonably related to data or network improvements.

Downtown Transportation Fund

- Eligible to receive loans, loan guarantees, or grants up to \$100,000 for capital transportation and related capital improvement projects.
- Grants may not exceed 50% of a project's cost.

Traffic Calming and Signage Options

- Authority to post speed limits of less than 25 mph to help calm traffic and make the downtown a more pedestrian-friendly environment.
- May erect and post informational signs to help guide visitors to downtown and to significant historical, educational, recreational or cultural landmarks.

Priority Consideration for State Grants and Siting of State Buildings

- Priority consideration for Municipal Planning Grants, Vermont Agency of Transportation Grants and funding from Vermont's Community Development Program.
- Priority site consideration by the State Building and General Services (BGS) when leasing or constructing buildings.

Special Assessment Districts

- May create a special assessment district (also known as special benefits district or business improvement district) to raise funds for both operating costs and capital expenses to support specific projects in the designated Downtown.

Neighborhood Development Area (NDA) Eligibility

- Communities may also designate Neighborhood Development Areas within ½ mile from the downtown district. Qualified projects are:
 - Exempt from Act 250 regulations and the land gains tax.
 - Eligible for, once designated, reduced Agency of Natural Resources review fees.

Act 250

- No permit fees and special downtown process with reduced criteria.
- Qualified mixed use-housing projects are exempt from review.