



Downtown Transportation Fund

2020 Program Description



Downtown Designation Program
Community Planning + Revitalization



AGENCY OF COMMERCE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

2020 Downtown Transportation Fund Grant Program Description

Program Overview

The Downtown Transportation Fund (DTF) has available approximately \$375,000 to help municipalities make a variety of transportation-related capital improvements (within or serving the downtown district and supporting economic development, as allowed by [24 V.S.A. §2796 \(c\)](#)). The maximum annual grant is \$100,000. Projects may include, but are not limited to, streetscape improvements, bike and pedestrian improvements, safety enhancements, rail or bus facilities, utility relocation, way-finding signage, street lighting, and ADA access improvements. Funds **may not be used** for costs incurred prior to the grant award, or general operating and maintenance costs such as repaving or administrative costs.

Timeline

- Application Deadline: March 9, 2020 @ 4:30 p.m.
- Award Decisions: April 27, 2020 (or scheduled Board meeting)
- Project Started: October 27, 2021
- Project Completed: October 27, 2022
- Final Report Due: November 27, 2022

Eligibility and Standard Provisions

- Municipalities are ineligible to receive funding if they have two or more active Downtown Transportation Fund grants.
- 2019 Downtown Reinvestment Statistics must be submitted prior to the grant submission deadline to be eligible.
- Only municipalities with a [State Designated Downtown District](#) may apply for funding.
- Proposed projects must be on municipally owned land.
- Projects must be within or serving a State Designated Downtown District.
- The maximum grant award for a municipality is \$100,000 in any fiscal year.
- Eligible costs may include acquisition, demolition, design and engineering, project management, permitting, and environmental remediation when they are an essential element of an eligible project and cost is incurred after grant agreement is in place.
- Grant funds may **not** exceed 50% of the overall project cost and a 50% match is required.
- In-kind costs are an eligible source of matching funds.
- Grant funds may **not** be used to pay for costs incurred prior to the grant award.
- The costs of a related economic development project may also be used as a source of match if staff determines the project is required as a permit condition to the project seeking funds, or if the related project cannot be done without the support of this grant.
- Grantees are ineligible to receive funding if they are (a) suspended or debarred by the State or Federal Government; (b) delinquent in submitting their sub-recipient annual reports; or (c) delinquent in submitting their Single Audit Reports (if required).

Funding Alternatives

Additional project funding may be available through the [Vermont State Infrastructure Bank](#) that provides below market rates, currently 1%, to municipalities for qualified transportation related improvements. For additional information please contact the Vermont Economic Development Authority at info@veda.org or 802-828-5627.

The [Designated Downtown and Village Center Funding Directory](#) provides a list of other grant programs and funding sources that can support your community and project. You can also keep up to date on new grant opportunities and initiatives by subscribing to our newsletter [here](#).

Clean Water Initiative (CWI) Funding

The Downtown Transportation Fund (DTF) has an additional \$179,000 in funding from the Agency of Natural Resources, Clean Water Initiative (CWI). DTF projects may apply for up to \$100,000 of “add on” clean water funding for eligible storm water implementation projects. A 50% match is required for these funds. Examples of eligible projects can be found on the Department of Environmental Conservation [Green Stormwater Infrastructure \(GSI\)](#) web page. The [Vermont Green Streets Guide](#) (link) is a resource to help you plan, design and maintain your clean water project.

The Clean Water Initiative will provide additional funds for DTF projects to implement stormwater management practices that help control flooding, reduce erosion, and improve water quality. The project must primarily mitigate nutrient or sediment pollution.

Applicants seeking clean water funding must have their projects reviewed by the appropriate ANR staff to ensure that projects adhere to state standards and regulations and meet related permit compliance requirements. **All projects that are funded must have final design drawings reviewed by ANR staff prior to start of construction to ensure it meets the eligibility requirements.**

Please contact Marc Companion at Marc.companion@uvm.edu for technical assistance in submitting applications that include clean water elements. For general DTF program information, please contact Gary Holloway at gary.holloway@vermont.gov or 802-522-2444.

Project Readiness

Projects must be under construction within 18 months and completed within 30 months of the date of award. Projects involving ROW acquisitions or railroad crossings, must provide evidence that necessary permits and property agreements have been received. All other required permits necessary for the project should be listed with the status of each in the application. Applications that do not provide sufficient evidence they can meet this requirement will be invited to re-apply at a subsequent application round.

Phased Projects

Phased projects are allowed, provided the funding awarded in one fiscal year does not exceed \$100,000 and that each phase of the project is self-contained and does not require completion of another phase to serve the project’s intended function. Applications for subsequent phases compete with other applications on an equal basis. When planning a phased project, keep in mind that municipalities are ineligible to receive funding if they have two or more active Downtown Transportation Fund grants.

Historic Preservation Review

If awarded a grant, State Statute requires review of the proposed scope of work by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. This review evaluates potential impacts to archaeological sites and/or historic buildings for all state-funded projects, ensuring all work is consistent with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. For more information, please contact Yvonne Basque at Yvonne.Basque@vermont.gov or 802-505-1020.

Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTTrans) Review

Staff from the Vermont Agency of Transportation will review applications to access project schedule and readiness, budget and other technical aspects of the project.

Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) Review

Projects requesting clean water funding will be reviewed by Vermont Agency of Natural Resources staff to determine project eligibility, budget and other project criteria.

Competitive Criteria

Grants are reviewed, scored, and ranked by the Vermont Downtown Development Board prior to the board meeting using the competitive criteria. Applicants should review the competitive criteria carefully to ensure a complete and competitive application is submitted.

Amendment Policy

Minor alterations to the work plan or the approved budget may be allowed but only upon written request and approval. Substantial alterations are not allowed, and the end product must remain the same. No time extensions are granted. Projects that cannot be completed within the grant period under the terms of the grant agreement are closed out. The grant will cover eligible work completed and documented costs, however, ineligible or undocumented costs will not be funded, and associated funds must be returned.

Please direct questions to Gary Holloway, Downtown Program Manager at gary.holloway@vermont.gov or 802-522-2444.

Downtown Transportation Fund Grant 2020 Grant Application

Please submit one electronic copy of the complete application to gary.holloway@vermont.gov. The application must contain the following information:

Project Overview

Municipality name:

Project name:

Amount of Grant Funds Requested:

Match Amount:

Total Project Cost:

Project location

Is the project located on municipally owned property? Yes No

Is the project located within the state designated downtown district? Yes No

If no, please describe how the project serves and relates to the state designated downtown district:

Is the project part of a larger capital improvement project? Yes No

If yes, please describe the project phasing:

Primary Contact

Name:

Title:

Mailing address:

Zip code:

Email address:

Phone number:

Project Description

Provide a brief description of the project. Include measurable details like the total feet of sidewalk, number of streetlights installed, number and type of way-finding signs, number of net new parking spaces, etc.

What is the total funding request for this project, not including any clean water funding requests?

Clean Water Initiative Funding

Are you applying for clean water initiative funding? Yes No

If yes, how much are you requesting in additional funding? (\$20,000 min - \$100,000 max)

Note: 50% match is required

Local Downtown Program Coordination

Please describe how the municipality will coordinate with the local downtown organization to complete this project, if applicable.

Attachment Checklist

- Budget Worksheet
- Project Schedule
- List of Required Permits
- Response to Competitive Criteria
- Project Site Plan
- Conceptual Design
- Color Photographs
- Municipal Resolution
- Project Review Sheet
- Downtown Area Master Plan (Optional)

Attachment Checklist for Clean Water Initiative (optional)

- Response to Competitive Criteria
- Clean Water Initiative Budget
- ANR pre-application review

Competitive Criteria

Clearly and concisely respond to the following questions including Community Need, Community Impact, Clear Linkage of Proposed Project to the Municipal Plan and the Bonus Point question.

The Board uses the responses to the questions in the application to score and rank projects prior to the Board meeting. The Board considers the geographic distribution of funding and may award less funding than requested. The Board also considers the quality of the application as part of the scoring process. The total possible score is 22, including the bonus points.

1. COMMUNITY NEED:

Describe and document (reference relevant data, studies, reports, etc.) the important community and/or economic development needs or issues the project addresses, for example — poor accessibility to buildings, deteriorated sidewalks, insufficient lighting, inadequate way-finding signs, poor bicycle/pedestrian connections to downtown, deficient rail or bus facility, safety concerns, or other issues or needs not listed here.

Scored 0-5 using the following definitions:

0 – No information that describes or documents the need/issues; 1 – Incomplete information on the needs/issues, does not clearly describe or document the needs/issues; 2-3 – Vaguely describes the needs/issues, limited documentary evidence; 4 – Clearly and convincingly describes needs/issues; good documentary evidence; 5 – Clearly and convincingly describes needs/issues; strong documentary evidence, needs and issues are significant and/or urgent.)

2. COMMUNITY IMPACT:

Explain how the project offers a significant and long-lasting solution to the community and/or economic development needs or issues identified above, for example — making the community more accessible, contributing to the long-term economic development of the district, improving the aesthetics or appearance of the downtown, creating, or retaining business, restoring, or enhancing the vitality of the community, etc.

Scored 0-7 using the following definitions:

0 – No information on how the project offers a significant and long-lasting solution to the community; 1 – Incomplete information, does not clearly describe how the project addresses the identified needs/issues or have significant impact; 2-3 – Describes how the project addresses the needs/issues, but the significance and the term of the impacts are limited; 4-5 – Clearly describes how the project addresses the identified needs/issues, has lasting impact on the community, but it's not significant; 6 – Clearly describes how the project addresses the identified needs/issues, has a significant and lasting impact on the community; 7 – Clearly and convincingly describes how the project addresses the identified needs/issues and the project will have significant and long-lasting impact on the community.)

3. CLEAR LINKAGE OF PROPOSED PROJECT TO THE MUNICIPAL PLAN:

Explain how the project implements the ideas and actions set forth within the municipal plan. Include municipal plan language that describes the project or elements of the project. You must include specific excerpts from the municipal plan to receive a higher score.

Scored 0-4 using the following definitions:

0 – No information provided describing how the project is linked to the municipal plan; 1 - Linkage of project to municipal plan is presented but is weak with no specific supporting language from the municipal plan; 2 – Linkage of project to municipal plan is presented with limited and general supporting language from the municipal plan; 3 – Strong linkage of project to municipal plan with specific supporting language from the municipal plan that relates to the project; 4 – Strong linkage of specific project to the municipal plan and well-supported by specific town plan language indicating the project is a high priority.)

Bonus Point for Downtown Area Specific Master Planning +1 – Provide language from a downtown area specific master plan (not the municipal plan) such as [Better Connections](#) or other community engagement planning process document focused on the downtown that demonstrates direct support for this project. Please provide excerpts from the plan that clearly identifies and describes the project and are most relevant to the project.

Downtown Area Master Plans present a community-driven vision of the built environment for a downtown/village center/neighborhood/street. Master plans engage the community in a process to evaluate ways to enhance their community through improved connectivity, rehabilitation of buildings, or redevelopment of sites, and the introduction or improvement of streets, parks and open spaces. Master plans are action-oriented and layout a strategic implementation plan for both short-term and long-term public and private investments in the downtown, village center or neighborhood.

Bonus Point for Clean Water Initiative Projects +1 – Projects incorporating stormwater management practices into Downtown Transportation Fund projects that help control flooding, reduces erosion, and improves water quality. The project must primarily mitigate nutrient or sediment pollution.

QUALITY OF APPLICATION: The application is complete, well-written and internally consistent. The budget and timeline for construction is realistic; it describes a single, clearly defined project that clearly describes and documents the community need and impact. Permits are clearly identified, and the status indicated in the project schedule.

Scored 0-4 using the following definitions:

0 – Incomplete and poorly written, internally inconsistent or presents an unrealistic project with inadequate timeline and/or budget; 1– Application quality is fair, complete, but poorly written, inconsistent and/or unrealistic timeline and/or budget; 2 – Complete, pretty-good application with realistic project, timeline, and budget, but with flaws; 3 – Complete, well written application with realistic project, timeline, and budget, well-defined project; 4 – Concise, well-written application, realistic project, timeline, and budget, a well-defined project with good documentation of community need and impact).

Required Attachments

The application must contain the following attachments:

Responses to Competitive Criteria

- Attach written responses to the competitive criteria questions. Please limit the response to two pages or less (maximum 1,200 words).

Site Plan, Design and Photographs

- Attach a project site plan that includes the boundary of the downtown district, buildings, streets, and the location of the project clearly marked. (See Appendix A for sample site map.)
- Attach a conceptual design that details the scope of work. The conceptual design must be created using CAD or other professional design tool that shows specific details pertinent to the project and must be to scale. (See Appendix B for sample conceptual designs.)
- Attach labeled, color photographs of the project site and surroundings, especially adjacent or nearby buildings impacted by the project. If the project involves or impacts historic buildings, include photos of elements or materials that will be removed, altered, or repaired. Photographs should be labeled with the project name or description, location/address, and the view (e.g., Streetscape Extension Project, Main Street, SW.jpg).

Construction Schedule and Budget

- Provide a detailed project schedule that demonstrates that the project will be under construction within 18 months of the date of award and completed within 30 months of the date of award. (See Appendix C for a sample project schedule.)
- Provide a budget itemizing the scope of work and the sources and amounts of all project funds. Indicate the unit cost and total cost of each item in the budget.

Permits, Project Review Sheet and Municipal Resolution

- Provide a complete list of all required permits and the status of each.
- Provide a completed Project Review Sheet. Please contact the [Permit Specialist](#) in your region for assistance in completing the form. Be sure to allow 2-3 weeks for them to complete. Visit <http://dec.vermont.gov/permits> for more information. Please note that the Project Review Sheet is for Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) related permits only.
- Attach a copy of the municipal resolution showing the project and application are authorized by the municipality. (See Appendix D)

Downtown Area Master Plan Excerpts (required to receive consideration of bonus point)

- Attach excerpts from a Downtown Area Master Plan or other community engagement planning process document focused on the downtown that demonstrates direct support for this project.

Clean Water Initiative Application (optional)

Only complete this section if you are applying for additional clean water funding.

Amount of funds requested (\$20,000 min. - \$100,000 max with a 50% match requirement)

Please review General Criteria (Appendix E) and Reporting Requirements (Appendix F).

Clearly and concisely respond to the following questions.

Please explain the purpose, need and the desired outcomes of the water quality planning project. In addition, please describe how the project will improve water quality and manage stormwater to reduce nutrient and sediment pollution. The applicant should include any estimation of nutrient or sediment reductions that are expected to result from the project. (Up to 15 points)

- Source or cause of the water quality problem being addressed.
- The water quality improvement project or control action being proposed
- Why this project is important in terms of magnitude of nutrient and/or sediment reduction.

Please describe how the project implements prior planning efforts and community goals related to water quality (municipal plans, stormwater master plans and/or assessments, inventories, flow reduction plans, phosphorous control plans, etc.). (Up to 10 points)

Please describe additional benefits of your clean water project, e.g. features beyond basic clean water management practices. This may include enhanced landscaping features such as rain gardens, a shade provided by a system of canopy trees, pedestrian and/or bicycle amenities or other co-benefits of the project. (Up to 10 points)

Please detail your annual maintenance budget for the project and describe your plan to ensure the feature functions as designed long-term. (Up to 5 points)

Permit(s) and operation and maintenance plan agreement(s) must be in place prior to construction.

Please provide documentation demonstrating that you have consulted Agency of Natural Resource staff regarding your clean water project proposal, e.g. E-mail correspondence with staff. Please contact Marc Companion at Marc.companion@uvm.edu for technical assistance.

Funding Sources

Funding Source	Status of Funding	Amount
Downtown Transportation Fund		
Total		

Budget Estimates

Describe how you arrived at realistic budget estimates for the work plan.

Required Attachments for Clean Water Initiative Projects

Only required if you are applying for additional clean water initiative funding.

- Provide responses to the Competitive Criteria questions.
- Provide a separate budget sheet itemizing clean water elements of the project that are related to the scope of work and the sources and amounts of all project funds.
- Provide documentation demonstrating that you have consulted Agency of Natural Resource staff regarding your clean water project proposal. e.g. E-mail correspondence with staff. Please contact Marc Companion at Marc.companion@uvm.edu for technical assistance.

Appendix A
Sample Site Map

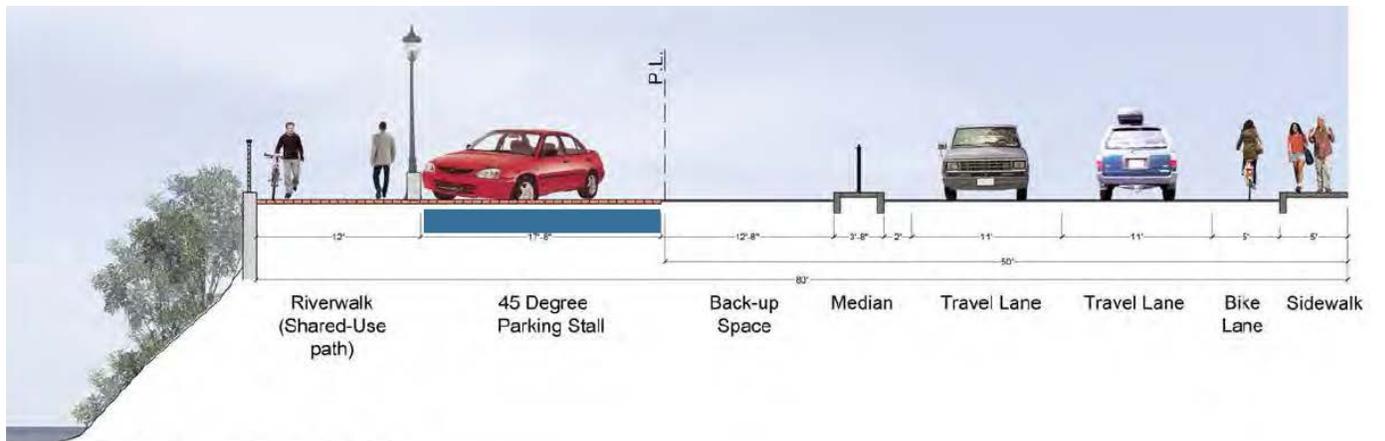


Appendix B
Sample Conceptual Design



Appendix B

Sample Conceptual Design



Appendix C

Sample Project Schedule

July 2019

- Purchased subject property (Completed).
- Submitted brownfield application (Completed)
- Submitted Environmental Review documents as required for the Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recover II grant (CDBG-DR2) (Completed)

September 2020

- Draft contract to develop construction and bid documents integrating both the civil and environmental elements (Completed)
- Finalized negotiations with Vermont Rail and V-Trans Rail Division for land swap agreement (Completed)

March 2020

- Municipality (with assistance from the downtown organization) submits application to CDBG-DR2 for \$1M for site clean-up and reconstruction of project area
- Municipality applies for a \$100,000 Downtown Transportation Fund (DTF) grant through the Vermont Downtown Program

April 2020

- Anticipate decision from DTF regarding grant application

May 2020

- Construction/Bid documents ready
- Submit permit applications (Municipal, Act 250, Section 106)

June 2020

- Anticipate decision from CDBG-DR2 regarding redevelopment grant

September 2020

- Anticipate final permit decisions

November 2020

- Distribute bid documents

December 2020

- Receive bids and select contractor

May 2021

- Begin street reconstruction

September 2021

- Complete construction

Appendix D

RESOLUTION FOR DOWNTOWN TRANSPORTATION FUND GRANT

WHEREAS, the Municipality of _____ is applying for funding as provided for in the State of Vermont FY 2020 Budget Act and may receive an award of funds under said provisions; and

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

WHEREAS, the municipality has agreed to provide local funds for a downtown transportation grant.

Now, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED

1. That the Legislative Body of this Municipality enters into and agrees to the requirements and obligations of this grant program including a commitment to match funds of 50% of total project cost;
2. That the Municipal Planning Commission recommends applying for said Grant;

(Name of Planning Commission Chair)

(Signature)

Passed this _____ day of _____, _____.

LEGISLATIVE BODY*

<i>(name)</i>		<i>(signature)</i>

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESOLUTION FORM

- A. The Legislative Body of the Municipality must adopt this resolution or one that will have the same effect. This Form may be filled in or the adopted Resolution may be typed on municipal letterhead, filling in the name of the municipality and the Legislative Body (e.g., Board of Selectmen).
- B. Following formal adoption, the Resolution must be signed by a majority of the legislative body. The Chair of the Planning Commission must also sign upon endorsement by vote of the Planning Commission.
- C. This form must be included in the grant application e-mailed to gary.holloway@vermont.gov.

Appendix E Clean Water Initiative General Criteria

The goal of the Clean Water Initiative (CWI) is to support projects that improve water quality by reducing nutrient and sediment pollution, thereby protecting or restoring natural resources such as lakes, rivers, and wetlands.

CWI projects focus on priorities described in Act 64 of 2015 and modified in Act 154 (2016) and Act 168 (2018). The project must primarily mitigate nutrient or sediment pollution. It may address other pollutants such as bacteria or chloride but only if it is secondary to the primary pollutant (of a nutrient or sediment). Funding will go to projects restoring Vermont's waters, and demonstrates progress toward meeting water quality restoration targets outlined in the Total Maximum Daily Loads (or TMDLs).

Eligible projects include municipal stormwater implementation projects that implement stormwater management practice(s) that collect, store, infiltrate, and filter runoff that contains nutrient and sediment pollution from hard surfaces associated with designated downtown areas. This may include projects identified in a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) plans such as a Flow Restoration Plan (FRP) or a Phosphorous Control Plan (PCP).

Projects that do not meet this goal will be considered ineligible.

DEC will conduct a technical review of all applications for eligibility. DEC will make a determination as to whether the application is eligible and consistent with the CWIP Policy goals and requirements of the respective grant program.

Appendix F Clean Water Initiative Reporting Requirements

DEC has developed a standardized process for grant funded projects to ensure a consistent approach for tracking project milestones, deliverables and performance measures. It is the grant recipient's responsibility to ensure that all milestones, deliverables and performance measures have been met.

Project Type: Stormwater	Milestones	Deliverables
Stormwater – Implementation	Project initiated; RFP Issued (if applicable)	Copy of RFP (if applicable); photo(s) of site(s) pre-implementation
	Contractor selected (if applicable)	Signed contract; statement of reasoning for contractor selection (if applicable)
	Permit documentation (if applicable)	Required permits secured (if applicable)
	Implementation update(s); BMP(s) implemented	Interim report(s) (includes summary of work to date, percent progress, construction photos)
	O&M plan created and signed	Signed 10-year minimum O&M plan
	Project complete	Final Performance Report ³ including BMP reporting (indicate BMP status as constructed); press release; post-implementation photo(s)

Storm water Sector	Project Type	Step	Definition	Performance Measures
Storm water	Stormwater – Implementation	3	Implementation of stormwater management practice(s) that collect, store, infiltrate, and filter runoff that contains nutrient and sediment pollution from hard surfaces associated with developed/urban/suburban areas. Permit(s) and operation and maintenance plan agreement(s) are in place prior to construction.	Acres of impervious surface treated Acres of impervious area removed (if applicable)

All grant recipients whose grant agreement includes construction of a publicly visible project are required to have posted a Clean Water Project sign, to be provided by the State and returned by the grant recipient upon construction completion.