

VERMONT OUTDOOR RECREATION COLLABORATIVE PILOT COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAM 2018-19

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Vermont legislature established the Vermont Outdoor Recreation Communities pilot grant program in 2018 with the passage of Act 194. The program's purpose is to make grants from \$10,000 up to \$100,000 available to help one or more Vermont communities fully leverage their local outdoor recreation assets to achieve a status of being a truly "outdoor recreation friendly community" as envisioned by the Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) steering committee. VOREC's goals are to:

- Grow the outdoor recreation related business opportunities
- Increase participation in outdoor recreation activities
- Strengthen the quality and extent of outdoor recreation resources
- Increase stewardship of outdoor recreation resources

Grant funding can be used for a variety of purposes with the result being a community(ies) that can show measurable success supporting and growing their local economies through leveraging outdoor recreation. The successful community(ies) will be showcased as prototypes (aka "Pilots") for a longer-term community designation program with the goal of raising the economic tide for all recreation-oriented communities.

Administration

The program is administered by the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (FPR) in partnership with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) and VOREC. A selection committee will make recommendations for funding to the Commissioner of FPR, who in consultation with ACCD and VOREC, will select communities for the program.

Please email a complete PDF file to becca.washburn@vermont.gov NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 14, 2018. If you cannot email a PDF, hard copies must be received no later than 5 pm on December 14th at the following address:

Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation
1 National Life Drive, Dewey 2
Montpelier, VT 05620
Attn: Becca Washburn
802.793.3432

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GRANTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Project Team: Applicants must establish a dedicated project team which includes a broad range of stakeholder representation (i.e. municipal staff/volunteers, education, businesses, RPCs, RDCs, outdoor recreation, social justice, or environmental organizations). At a minimum, the project team must have an outdoor recreation representative.

Measurable Outcomes: Grantees will be responsible for ongoing tracking and measurement of outcomes to demonstrate the long-term success of their project.

Models & Templates: Products and deliverables developed as part of this grant program will be available for adaptation and, as appropriate, replication by other communities throughout Vermont.

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ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants

Vermont municipalities are eligible to apply. Preferential consideration will be given to municipalities that are a state designated downtown or designated village center. A consortium of municipalities is also welcome to apply. Applicants must demonstrate that they:

- Have completed some prior planning and mapping of outdoor recreation assets
- Have identified outdoor recreation as a component of their local economy through a local, regional, or statewide planning effort (town, regional, recreation plans, etc.)
- Have dedicated staff and/or volunteer capacity to ensure long-term success of project

Eligible Expenses

- Services of consultants and technical assistance providers
- Small scale outdoor recreation infrastructure improvements
- Material or equipment to support outdoor recreation programs
- Marketing related expenses (i.e. local/regional/statewide campaigns, event support)
- Community based outdoor recreation planning, including assessments and/or mapping (application cannot be for planning only)
- Securing public access through the acquisition of land, easements, or rights-of-way

Ineligible Expenses

- Standalone planning
- Administrative staff time (grant management)
- Political activities
- Expenses incurred before the grant is awarded

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SELECTION CRITERIA

Applicants are instructed to use the criteria below to describe your community(ies) current conditions and how the proposed project will achieve VOREC's vision for an outdoor recreation friendly community by enhancing assets and connectivity in ways that improve economic conditions. See instructions on page 7.

Existing Assets & Capacity. Strong foundation of outdoor recreation assets already in place with potential for growth on both private and public lands

- Community(ies) has identified existing recreational assets and planned for future expansion or enhancement
- Presence of outdoor recreation assets with capacity to serve wide range of users and/or capacity to expand into underserved areas or connect to other existing assets
- Community's recreation assets are or have the potential to be connected to a commercial center
- Community(ies) has complementary projects in progress: such as downtown sidewalks or multi-use path extension

Planning & Environmental Stewardship. Identification of outdoor recreation as a priority through planning efforts and demonstrated commitment to balancing natural resource protection with enhancement of recreational assets.

- Existing planning connects outdoor recreation and economic development.
- Capital improvement planning demonstrates a commitment to making capital investments for outdoor recreation.
- Community(ies) has a current Open Space Plan
- Community(ies) has completed natural resources inventories
- Community(ies) has an impaired waterway plan
- Community(ies) has an active conservation commission or similar committee or organization

Community Support. Community commitment to an outdoor recreation vision

- Community(ies) has an active outdoor recreation community group(s) and demonstrated experience working in collaboration with partners
- Demonstrated experience with hosting community events
- Capital budgeting demonstrates commitment to maintaining high quality outdoor recreation assets

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- Community(ies) is contributing in-kind services or cash to accomplish proposed project

Regional Connectivity. Opportunities for connecting assets or collaborating with others to leverage greater impact with outdoor recreation assets.

- Planning has considered ways to connect assets locally and regionally
- Strategies exist to leverage an existing or potential recreation asset with regional and/or state significance

Economic & Community Need. Community has demonstrated need for economic growth and investment. Increased participation and spending from outdoor recreation related activities will improve the economic conditions in the community.

- Underutilized or vacant properties
- Slow growth in grand list value
- Underemployment and underserved populations
- Decline in meals, rooms and retail taxes
- Demographic information and data showing socioeconomic need
- Federal & State designations indicating economic distress (Opportunity Zone, Low Income Census Tract, etc.)

Existing Business. Existing solid network of local supporting businesses

- Community(ies) has a cluster of businesses to support outdoor recreation visitors, such as: overnight lodging, food & beverage, retail, services, and cultural amenities
- Community(ies) has venue(s) and parking to accommodate a variety of events
- Community(ies) has water and wastewater capacity to fill vacant commercial, lodging or housing, where applicable

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APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Applicant

Name of Sponsoring Municipality: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Project Manager: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Federal ID number (DUNS): _____

Grant Request (min. \$10,000- max. \$100,000): _____

Project Description (brief summary):

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APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Project Contributions to VOREC Objectives

(check all that apply)

- Promote outdoor recreation business opportunities
- Increase outdoor recreation participation opportunities
- Strengthen the quality and extent of outdoor recreation resources
- Increase stewardship of outdoor recreational resources

Eligible Project Activities

(check all that apply: projects should include two or more of these activities)

- Wayfinding & Interpretation.** Public access improvements including maps and/or other informational materials
- Environmental Stewardship.** Program or material needs related to environmental quality and stewardship of recreation assets
- Recreational Programming.** Program, material, or equipment support for existing or new outdoor recreation events and programs
- Capital Projects.** Signage/kiosks/maps, or small scale/leveraged outdoor recreation infrastructure improvements
- Community Marketing.** Marketing activities (a percentage of a project/the program)
- Community Planning.** Planning activities (a percentage of a project/the program)

Attachments

- Project Narrative.** Describe how your community(ies) currently demonstrates the criteria outlined on pages 4 & 5 and how the proposed project will achieve VOREC's vision for an outdoor recreation friendly community by enhancing assets and connectivity in ways that improve economic conditions.
- Project Team List.** Provide a list of project team members (see Grantee Responsibilities) including name, organizational affiliation, role and responsibility.
- Letters of Support.** Attach a maximum of 3 letters of support that represent community and/or regional support for the proposed project and how it reflects the community's expressed needs.
- Project Timetable.** Provide a detailed work plan for completion of the proposed activities.
- Budget.** Complete the enclosed budget sheet.
- Measurable Outcomes.** Describe how the project team will measure the impact of this project over time.
- Supplemental Information.** Attach any other information that you feel would be helpful in evaluating the proposed project (Pictures, maps and sketches, etc.).

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BUDGET SHEET

VOREC - Pilot Community Grant Program BUDGET				
Other Funding Committed	Funding Source	Type	Amount	Status
Capital Campaign	Private	Cash	\$ 3,000	Pending
Total Other Funding Committed			\$ -	
VOREC Project Activity	VOREC Request	Other Funding Committed	Total Activity Costs	
Mapping Services & Printing	\$ 9,600	\$ 400	\$ 10,000	<i>For example purposes only-remove before submitting</i>
Total Project Costs	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	