



Two Rivers-Ottauquechee

Regional Commission Newsletter

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FY 04 First Responder Grant Funding Available

The Vermont Department of Public Safety, Homeland Security Unit (HSU), has announced the 2004 State Homeland Security grants that will provide approximately \$10,494,800 in federal funds for domestic preparedness equipment for local fire, police, and emergency medical services (EMS).

The HSU has received an additional grant, the 2004 Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Grant, that will provide \$3,484,800 for local law enforcement organizations, including Sheriffs Departments.

Grant materials and the allowable equipment list are available for download from www.dps.state.vt.us/homeland/grant.html

Bunker gear and vehicles should be applied for under the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program outlined in the article below.

A goal of the HSU is to ensure that all local emergency response organizations utilize the grant funds to acquire essential response and prevention equipment that will enhance their capabilities to respond to terrorism

incidents as well as more traditional emergencies.

The deadline for submitting equipment grant proposals for both grants is March 31, 2004. Proposals must be postmarked by that date. To facilitate processing, grant proposals may be faxed to HSU at 241-5551.

If you have any questions about these two grants, contact Kevin Geiger at 457-3188 or kgeiger@trorc.org.

Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program

The Federal Department of Homeland Security (DHS) opened the application period via the web for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program on Monday, March 1, 2004 at 9am. **The application period will be open through 5pm, Friday, April 2, 2004.**

The Assistance for Firefighters Grant Program (AFGP) is administered by the Department of Homeland Security's Office for Domestic Preparedness (ODP). The program assists rural, urban and suburban fire departments throughout the United States to increase the effectiveness of firefighting operations, to improve firefighter health and safety programs and to establish or expand fire prevention and safety programs. For 2004, Congress has provided

\$750 million for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program.

As in past years, the Application and Program Guidance are automated and are available online at: www.firegrantsupport.com

The website contains other useful background information on the AFGP, including a tutorial on applying for the program, a list of Frequently Asked Questions and the currently scheduled AFGP workshops.

This year all Federal grantees must obtain a DUNS number, (a unique nine-character identification number provided by the commercial company Dun & Bradstreet). There is no charge to obtain a DUNS

number, and it is the applicant's responsibility to obtain one. It is recommended that applicants request a DUNS number as soon as possible by calling 1-800-333-0505.

Fire departments that have questions regarding the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program should contact Kevin Geiger at 457-3188 or kgeiger@trorc.org.



Governor Announces 1.8 Million in Transportation Enhancements

Governor Jim Douglas and Transportation Secretary Patricia McDonald announced that \$1.8 million dollars would be distributed among 15 communities for transportation enhancement projects.

Governor Douglas said these funds help communities improve intermodal transportation systems, recreational opportunities and the development of our historic downtowns. "Enhancement funds are used to restore historic buildings, rebuild and extend sidewalks and pathways in downtowns, improve hiking and biking trails that promote outdoor activity, and purchase scenic easements that enhance our travel and tourism industry," the Governor said. "They are a very beneficial addition to our transportation system."

"These awards, combined with previous grants to Vermont communities, are the foundation funding for many local economic development and pedestrian safety projects," Secretary McDonald said. "While ideas and seed funding originate in one community and grant awards are made by peer representatives from several other Vermont towns, all state residents are the collective recipients of these initiatives. It is a comprehensive bottom-up grant program representing the best of Vermont for Vermonters."

Applications for enhancement funding are reviewed by VTrans to affirm project eligibility criteria, then are individually considered and awarded by a grant committee. VTrans staff provides technical and limited project assistance to grant recipients. Most community projects are completed within two years of the grant award.

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) passed by Congress in 1991, created the Transportation Enhancement Program offering communities new funding opportunities to help expand transportation choices, such as safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities, scenic routes, beautification, and other investments that increase recreation opportunity and access. In 1998, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century

(TEA-21) reaffirmed its commitment to enhancing communities by increasing funding support for enhancements through 2003, averaging about \$630 million per year nationwide.

Towns in the TRORC Region that received Transportation Enhancement funding include:

- Town of Randolph: to fund a planning study for former freight depot redevelopment -- \$20,000
- Town of Strafford through the Division for Historic Preservation: construction of visitor center facilities as part of a larger historic site project for the Morrill Homestead historic site -- \$308,960
- Newbury with the Upper Valley Land Trust: Purchase the development rights on a scenic 63 acre farm.

Towns that applied but did not receive funding include: Granville, Bradford, Chelsea, Newbury, Thetford, Rochester, Royalton, Sharon and Woodstock. In total, TRORC towns applied for \$2,192,588 in enhancement funding.



DHCA Updates Housing and Wages Study

The Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) has updated their 2002 publication "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Housing and Wages in VT".

The 2004 update of the report indicates that Vermont's housing shortage continues to drive up rents and home prices at rates faster than many Vermonters' wages.

This report is available for download at <http://www.dhca.state.vt.us/Housing/housing-wages.pdf>.

Tax Map Contracts

Has your Town recently updated its contract or entered into a new contract with a tax parcel mapping firm? While TRORC is not a tax parcel mapping contractor, TRORC does review tax mapping contracts for completeness.

A well-crafted contract contains several items. It specifies that data products must be compliant with VGIS standards, discusses the content of any paper map products (labels, types of linework), outlines the extent of annual updates and the corresponding responsibilities of the town and contractor, and discusses if and how tax parcel data are going to be linked to the grand list.

Many towns also are concerned about the ownership of data developed during the tax mapping process. Contracts should explicitly state that data developed by the contractor for the town are property of the town.

Charles L. Merriman, Special Assistant to the Attorney General for the Department of Taxes, recently wrote that "the digital data produced and/or acquired by the contractor are 'public records' under Vermont law. 'Public record' or 'public document' includes 'all papers, documents, machine readable materials or any other written or recorded matters, regardless of their physical form or characteristics, that are produced or acquired in the course of agency business...' 1 V.S.A. Sec. 317(b). Within the body of data, there may be a datum that is exempt from public disclosure, but in general the information is public. Similarly, the ability to read the data may require software that is proprietary. 1 V.S.A. 317(b)(9). But the information itself is public, irrespective of any clause or language in the contract between the town and the contractor."

If you have any questions about tax parcel mapping contracts, please contact Pete Fellows at 457-3188 or pfellows@trorc.org.



U P C O M I N G E V E N T S

Vermont GIS Expo

The Vermont GIS EXPO includes many opportunities to learn more about GIS (computer mapping technology and data) in Vermont. Attendees can choose from short presentations, product demonstrations, workshops/trainings, and exhibits. Take this opportunity to learn about new products/services/technology and increase your understanding of GIS as well as mingle, network, and make connections with GIS professionals.

Date: April 8 from 9am - 3pm
 Place: Wyndham Hotel, Burlington
 Contact: Leslie Pelch at VT Center for Geographic Information at 882-3002 or lesliep@vcgi.org
 For information and/or registration: <http://www.vcgi.org/expo>

Community Development Block Grant Applications Due

The Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) assists communities by providing financial and technical assistance to identify and address local needs and priorities in the areas of housing, economic development, public facilities, and public services primarily for persons of low and moderate income.

Only Vermont cities, towns, and incorporated villages chartered to function as general purpose units of local government are eligible to apply for grants under this program. However the majority of projects are a coordinated effort between the municipalities, community groups and local or state non-profit organizations.

The next round of applications is due on March 23, 2004. For more information, contact:

In Orange County: Molly Dugan-Director, VCDP at 828-5218 or Molly.Dugan@state.vt.us.

In Windsor County: Rod Griffin - Community Development Specialist at 828-2998 or Rod.Griffin@state.vt.us.

In Addison County: Nate Bailly- Community Development Specialist at 828-3220 or Nate.Bailly@state.vt.us.

TOECs at Lake Morey

The Town Officers Education Conference, one of 5, all-day, regional events with workshops for various municipal officials is upon us again. Planning and zoning topics include orientation for new members, public meeting facilitation, community data, Act 250, GIS mapping, and a planning and zoning roundtable.

Date: April 20 at 8am
 Place: Lake Morey Inn in Fairlee
 Directions: <http://crs.uvm.edu/toecs>
 Cost: \$40 - \$45
 Contact: Mary Peabody at UVM at 223-2389 or mary.peabody@uvm.edu
 For information and/or registration: <http://crs.uvm.edu/toecs>

Building Local Conservation Leadership at TOECs

Zoning Administrators, Officers & Town Clerks: Still confused about the new Vermont Wastewater System & Potable Water Supply Rules for land subdivision and development?

Permit Specialists from the Department of Environmental Conservation Regional Offices will explain these & other DEC rules, and how their services can help your residents avoid costly delays in securing state permits.

Look for this session at the 4/20 TOEC in Fairlee!

Work Zones and Flagging

Vermont Local Roads is sponsoring a workshop for municipal personnel, especially those involved in work zone traffic control and flagging. Each will receive a pocket card showing successful completion.

Date: March 17 at 8am
 Place: Bradford Fire Station
 Cost: \$10
 Contact: VT Local Roads at 654-2652

Instructors: Hank Lambert is from VT Local Roads; Stephen Jerome, and Mike Stafford are Traffic Control Technicians/Flagger Trainers.

CRJC Funding Available

Connecticut River Joint Commissions (CRJC) is pleased to offer Partnership grants once again to communities and organizations in the river's watershed in Vermont and New Hampshire. A total of \$87,000 is available.



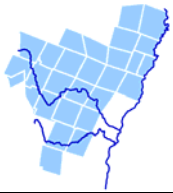
Grants of \$500-5,000 are available to projects that support recreation and water quality-related activities and improvements, benefit agriculture, encourage responsible land use, or teach people about river-related issues. Also eligible are projects that conserve aspects of the valley's natural and cultural heritage and assist communities participating in the Connecticut River Byway.

Town boards or committees, non-profit, tax-exempt organizations, regional organizations, and public or private schools are eligible to apply.

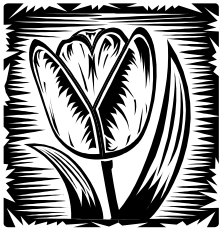
CRJC appreciates the support of Senators Judd Gregg and Patrick Leahy in seeking the Congressional appropriation which funds the program.

Applications are available for download from www.crjc.org. **Applications are due April 7.** Announcement of awards is expected in late May.





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Think Spring!

News Shorts

Last GMNF Plan Management Areas Meeting

The March meeting of the GMNF Plan Revision process will be held in Middlebury.

This is the last GMNF Plan Revision meeting discussing the management areas before the plan revision team takes the spring to develop the management area alternatives. In other words, to be heard, please attend this meeting and speak up. Management area input from earlier meetings and area and resource maps will be reviewed.

The Plan Revision Team will schedule its next meeting sometime this summer to review the proposed management area alternatives.

Date: March 17 from 5:30pm - 9pm
 Place: Ilsley Library, Middlebury
 Contact: Melissa Reichert at 747-6754
 For information : http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/gmfl/nepa_planning/plan_revision.htm



TRORC Executive Committee

William Emmons III, Pomfret
 David Brandau, Royalton
 William Harvey, Rochester
 Arnold Castagner, Tunbridge
 Jerry Fredrickson, Barnard

LEPC Meeting

The next meeting of Local Emergency Planning Commission (LEPC) #12 will take place on Thursday, March 11th.

Location: Sharon Elementary School
 Time: 6:30-8:30
 Pizza and drinks will be provided, as usual.

Tentative Agenda Includes:

- Bylaw Adoption
- Committee Reports
- Grant Updates
- CERT Update

Please Contact Kevin Geiger at 457-3188 or kgeiger@trorc.org for more information.