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### PROJECT UPDATES

**ARPA Updates and Reminders**

- Treasury has issued revised [Compliance and Reporting Guidance](#). It includes helpful summaries of the requirements all Towns must follow under Uniform Guidance and the Award Terms and Conditions.
- We strongly recommend that you begin preparing for your first Project and Expenditure Report, which is due April 30th. The report will cover any expenditures made between March 3, 2021 and March 31, 2022. **You will need to file a report even if you have not yet expended any funds.** The process must be started by the person whom your town designated as the town’s authorized representative when you first certified for your award. **Gaining access to the portal is a multi-step process; we recommend you clear those hurdles now so that you don’t find yourself hitting technical difficulties at the last minute.** For more information, review the following resources:
  - [Project and Expenditure Report User Guide](#)
  - [Supporting Documents User Guide](#)
  - [Webinars on VLCT’s website](#)  
    (Scroll down to “Resources and Information”)
- We continue to encourage towns to delay expenditures until after the end of the first reporting...
As we have noted in previous communications, the Final Rule has made the Revenue Replacement category the easiest and most flexible path for our communities to use their ARPA awards. We are recommending that Towns categorize the entirety of their awards under Revenue Replacement, which will allow those funds to be used for “any service traditionally provided by a government,” excluding the restricted uses outlined in the Final Rule. Reporting under this category is much easier than it will be under other categories. For more information, see Treasury’s overview document.

- Note that ARPA grant administrative expenses can be reported under Revenue Replacement as personnel expenses.
- If you are undertaking a project that pools funds from multiple towns, and if you will be doing so under the Revenue Replacement category, then in your federal reporting you will not be required to formally demonstrate that your Town is receiving a benefit that is proportional to its investment. However, it is good practice to informally document the benefits for your community.
- If you are contemplating transferring money to organizations, businesses, or individuals, be aware of the distinction Treasury makes between beneficiaries and subrecipients. A subrecipient is operating under an agreement/contract to provide services on behalf of a Town. More information can be found in the Compliance and Reporting Guidance.
- One possible approach to minimize the administrative burden on your Town is to use your ARPA monies to pay off the non-contract portions of your regular operating budget (e.g., salaries and benefits). Doing so avoids federal procurement regulations, and it frees up money in your budget that is not restricted by ARPA regulations. If your Town is interested in taking this approach, keep in mind the following guidance from VLCT:
  - Accounting Considerations: As with any funding source, effort should be made to document the use of the funds clearly and thoroughly for audit purposes. Examples of documentation could be a memo describing what the funds were used for and a supporting spreadsheet showing the budget lines, actual expenditures, and how much ARPA money was spent toward that line.
  - If it’s illegal to spend taxpayer money on it, don’t spend ARPA money on it.
  - If spending money on it will create a conflict of interest, or even the appearance of a conflict of interest, then don’t spend your ARPA money on it.
  - If you would not bring it before the voters on Town Meeting Day, then maybe you should not spend your ARPA money on it.
  - VLCT can provide tailored accounting guidance if you have questions about fund assignment procedures. Because each town has different policies and practices, they cannot provide one-size-fits-all budgeting guidance.

- Note that the Davis-Bacon Act does not apply to projects that are funded solely through your local ARPA dollars.
- As always, please reach out to Sarah with any questions: swraight@trorc.org, 802-457-3188 x3007

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Reach out to Sarah Wraight (swraight@trorc.org) for any information or questions you may have about ARPA.

**Call for Artist Spot Light Feature and 3CVT Zone Updates**

Our Zone is home to extraordinary artists, creatives, and organizations, and we’re excited to share artist features across the 3CVT Listserv, website, and social media. If you are interested in being a future feature, please email Kimberly Gilbert at kgilbert@trorc.org

This May, TRORC will be hosting two Covid recovery and response forums for the Creative Sector. This will be an opportunity for creatives in our Zone to have a conversation about how our communities can recover from Covid-19 and to hear updates from the Vermont Creative Network.
TRORC and the 3CVT Steering Committee will soon begin reviewing proposals to select a marketing consultant to provide a marketing package for the creative economy in east central Vermont. The consultant will assist in identifying appropriate resources and tools to help 3CVT Creatives market more effectively and expand reach and impact. TRORC staff will then offer technical assistance to individuals and organizations who choose to use these resources and tools later this year.

Learn more and stay up to date by visiting the 3CVT website, 3CVT Facebook page, or subscribing to the 3CVT Email Discussion List. This project is funded by the U.S. Economic Development Administration and TRORC.

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**REMC Held First Meeting**

On March 17, 2022 from 12 – 1 p.m., the first meeting of the TRORC Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC) was held. The REMC will be filling in a critical all-hazards planning hole in the Region from the recent consolidation of the Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC). TRORC will be managing and facilitating emergency management planning activities for all hazards through the REMC. The REMC is composed of all 30-member towns, with each town appointing two voting members. The first voting member is the Emergency Management Director (EMD), and the second voting member is an emergency services representative (fire, ems, and police).

The REMC will be conducting all-hazards preparedness planning, coordinating with Vermont Emergency Management (VEM), the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC), and the new Statewide LEPC. TRORC will be providing administrative support to include meeting minutes, grant applications, planning support, and meeting setup. Funding for this is provided through VEM.

The REMC will, on an annual basis, prepare an annual plan that will consist of regional contact information, regional resources, and regional mutual aid agreements. Each REMC will also vote in and send a representative(s) to be a member on the statewide LEPC, participate in the Vermont Integrated Preparedness Planning Workshop (IPPW), and participate in the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment and Stakeholder Preparedness Review (THIRA SPR).

For the meeting login information, go to https://www.trorc.org/event/regional-emergency-management-committee/ or contact Kevin Geiger at kgeiger@trorc.org.

Prior LEPC discusses hazards in the region. Credit: TRORC staff.

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**DEC Municipal Road General Permit Update**

**2022 Due Dates:**
April 1 - Annual Report Form (no fee)
June 1 - Annual Fee $500, $1350, or $1800 - prorated based on population and road miles. Towns will be sent an email invoice from DEC in April.
December 31 - 15% of 100 segments or 15 segments (just under 1 mile of road) are required to be
brought up to the MRGP standards. Please keep track of where road segments have been upgraded and make those updates through the DEC Survey 123 app or the MRGP web-based Reporter Tool. If you need help, attend a Virtual Road Roundtable training or check out the MRGP website.

DEC and the VTrans Local Roads programs will be offering a series of Virtual and In-Person Road Round Table Forums in 2022. They are currently scheduled for March 30, 2022 from 9:00-10:30am and April 27, 2022 from 9:00-10:30am. Check the VTrans Local Roads Program website for dates and registration information: Dates and Registration Information

This year’s Virtual Road Roundtable Forum Topics will include:

- How to download and use DEC’s MRGP Road Erosion Inventory (REI) applications such as Collector and Survey 123.
- How to re-assess road segments after they have been upgraded to MRGP standards.
- How to view, interpret, and use your town’s REI data in the MRGP database portal.
- How to use mapping tools to assist in implementation of road practices.

Want to find the Road Erosion Inventory for your town? Want to show others the progress your town has made to implement the road standards? Check out the Implementation Table Portal to find Baseline REI summaries, Baseline REI inventories, Current inventories, Outlet surveys and Progress Reports.

![Town of Newbury, Fulton Road ditching project. Credit: TRORC staff.](image)

**Emergency Management Reminder: Local Emergency Management Plans are due May 1st**

Local Emergency Management Plans (LEMP) must be submitted by May 1, 2022 to Kevin Geiger at kgeiger@trorc.org, as required by Vermont Emergency Management (VEM). This annual emergency plan is critical for response efforts during natural disasters and is an incentive for communities to increase the state share of federally declared disasters through the Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF). Last year was the first year that the new LEMP format was implemented. This year, if there are no changes to the main body of the LEMP, the legislative body will only need to adopt and resubmit the adoption form. This form, as well as templates of the plan, can be found at https://vem.vermont.gov/plans/lemp. Kevin will be reaching out to all 30-member communities through email reminding each town to update and submit the LEMP by May 1.

![Spring flood seminar hosted by Vermont Emergency Management.](image)

**Awarded Hazard Mitigation Plan Funding?**
TRORC Staff have been receiving several questions regarding recent awards to member towns for their Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP), and we wanted to provide some clarification! If you were awarded, TRORC cannot assist you with your grant award details, as we are potential contractors for this work. Funding is distributed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), through the State of Vermont, to the municipality. Through this grant award, you are required to follow your town’s procurement process. This funding was made available to you so you can hire a private contractor, regional planning commission or pay town staff to create the Plan, as FEMA sees mitigation plan updates as an entirely new plan. This requires an extensive public process and going through a FEMA review of your mitigation plan to ensure it meets new FEMA criteria. Mitigation plans typically take 6 months from start to finish.

Please reach out to Vermont Emergency Management Mitigation Planner Caroline Massa at caroline.massa@vermont.gov for assistance with your grant.

Tropical Storm Irene on Hale Hollow Road in Plymouth. Credit: TRORC staff.

New Resources Added to the Health Policy Clearinghouse

The Green Peak Alliance’s Health Policy Clearinghouse, hosted by TRORC, has new resources available for policy makers to support healthy communities. New additions include templates for municipal smoke-free housing and smoke-free town-owned parks and recreation areas, as well as the municipal guidance document released by the Cannabis Control Board in January. To access these resources and more, go to www.trorc.org/healthpolicyclearinghouse.

New Resources Added to the Health Policy Clearinghouse website.

TRORC Begins Housing Bylaw Modernization Project with Seven-Town Group

Our region has a housing crisis, and it is getting worse. It is not a small problem. Tens of thousands of individuals and families across the region struggle to afford their home, while others lack access to needed in-home supportive services.

This seven-town consortium will greatly improve the zoning bylaws in these towns to address the region’s housing shortage. Zoning can add complexity to the development of more housing units. Density, lot sizes, and parking requirements can be unfeasible for development in designated downtowns and villages or thwart efficiencies in project design. Permit processes can create delays and costs. This project will bring communities together for a common cause to make positive change in the way municipal officials and residents think of affordable housing. Since this is not just a project
to adjust language in zoning bylaws, educating the public on the benefits of allowing different types of housing is key to making this a success for all seven communities.

TRORC is hosting two remote meetings to inform the residents of these communities on the project, the intended development pattern of implementing zoning changes (what it looks like, who it serves, the effect on taxes, etc.).

**Public Meetings:**
Wednesday, April 20th at 5:30 pm: [Meeting Link]
Thursday, April 21st at 5:30 pm: [Meeting Link]

For more information contact Steven Bauer sbauer@trorc.org.

Rendering from Wilder, Vermont after Bylaw Modernization Project participation. Credit: TRORC staff.

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**EVENTS AND FORUMS**

**2022 VT Walk/Bike Summit Save the Date!**

In partnership with Vermont Agency of Transportation, and along with a number of other participating organizations and sponsors, the Addison County Regional Planning Commission, in concert with the Walk-Bike Council of Addison County will host the statewide Vermont Walk/Bike Summit at the Town Hall Theater in Middlebury, VT. Learn more by visiting: [VT Walk/Bike Summit 2022]

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**Green Justice Zones Forum**

Wednesday, March 23 from 6-7:30 p.m.

What is green justice, and how can it inform planning and community development in Vermont? A Green Justice Zone is the concept of making investments in sustainability and equity in neighborhoods that have been disinvested in and are overburdened with pollution, and/or have higher exposure to risks associated with climate change. These initiatives use data mapping, community design and a participatory budgeting process to support community revitalization in communities who have experienced the most harms by the current climate crisis. Vermont’s 11 regional planning commissions have partnered with Rights and Democracy to explore the concept and how it can be applied in our state. Guests include representatives from the Green Justice Zone efforts in the city of Providence, which has begun implementing its Climate Justice Plan.

Please follow this link to register: [Register Here]
Vermont’s 11 regional planning commissions have partnered with Rights and Democracy to explore investments in sustainability and equity.

Northern Border Regional Commission Announces 2022 State Economic Infrastructure Development Information Sessions

The Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) has scheduled 4 information sessions in support of the 2022 State Economic & Infrastructure Development (SEID) grant application opportunity, and we invite any parties interested in applying to this year’s program to attend one of the sessions. Each session will consist of an overview of the SEID program, and there will be plenty of time for questions.

Eligible organizations, which include nonprofit and governmental entities (state, local & Indian tribes), are currently able to access grant application details via NBRC’s website, nbrc.gov, and attendees are encouraged to review program materials prior to attending. NBRC State Program Managers will be in attendance as schedules allow.

All information sessions will be held via Zoom and registration is required. Registration links are available in the electronic version of the press release in the Recent News section of NBRC.

Potential applicants must express interest through Letters of Interest, which must be submitted by April 22nd at 5:00 p.m. Letters of Interest will be reviewed for eligibility, and will be used to determine which applicants will be invited to submit a full application, which will be due June 3rd. Awards are anticipated in August 2022.

For those considering applications in 2022, regardless of your ability to attend an information session, please contact NBRC Program Director Andrea Smith, and the NBRC Program Manager(s) in the State(s) where the proposed project will take place. Both will be happy to assist you as you develop your projects and applications:

For more information contact Kristie Farnham at 802.398.5268 or kristie.farnham@vermont.gov.

Staffing Changes

This month, we said goodbye to Regional Planner Tory Littlefield as she starts a new job doing emergency management work for a private consulting firm. Tory has been an essential member of
the team since 2015 working closely with the community. We wish you the best of luck!

Tory Littlefield

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Job Opening - Planner

TRORC is expanding! We are looking for an energetic Planner to be a part of our professional team. This is anticipated as a two-year term position, as it is partially grant funded. The potential exists for the position transitioning into permanent status. The Planner will be responsible for individual projects, especially working to bolster the creative economy, as well as assisting other professionals on a variety of existing projects. Job duties associated with the creative economy may include creating and presenting trainings, managing consultants, working with businesses, organizing events, social media, and collaborating with partner agencies. General planning duties include working with local officials on a variety of projects, primarily planning for land use, hazard mitigation, and transportation.

View the Full Job Ad Here!

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GRANTS AWARDED

Senator Sanders FY2022 Congressionally Directed Spending Requests

- **Randolph Area Community Development Corporation** - To create a resilient community microgrid encompassing a 36-unit neighborhood for low- and moderate-income families in Randolph, Vermont, which would be a first-of-its-kind demonstration of energy resiliency using direct-current (DC) technology at this scale - $750,000

- **Town of Bethel** - The Town of Bethel’s plan to upgrade its drinking water infrastructure is on Vermont’s Draft FY21 Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Intended Use Plan (IUP), and will replace a galvanized water line with a lead component. This project is a good use of taxpayer funds because it will help a small, rural town ensure its residents have safe drinking water, while simultaneously improving fire safety and hazardous drainage issues. - $600,000

- **Vermont Agency of Transportation (WRJ, VT)** - This funding will support a project to remedy accessibility deficiencies at the White River Junction Rail Station by reconstructing the platform to conform to all ADA access requirements. The White River Junction Rail Station is Vermont’s second busiest Amtrak station and serves as a rail gateway to eastern Vermont. - $800,000

- **Little Rivers Health Care (Wells River, VT)** - These funds will be used to enable Little Rivers Health Care (LRHC) to build a dental clinic in Wells River, VT to house two dentists, two hygienists, and support staff to deliver critically needed oral health care to approximately 3,500 patients. - $1,334,000
The Town of Randolph was awarded $750,000 to improve community resiliency. Credit: John Knox

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

The following are current grant opportunities available to communities.

- [Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)] - due June 30, 2022
- [Community Development Block Grants](https://www.cdbg.gov) (accepted on a rolling basis)
- [Better Places Grant](https://www.greatworkplaces.org) (accepted on a rolling basis)

Please contact Peter Gregory at pgregory@trorc.org for application assistance for any of these grant programs.

MRGP Re-Issuance in Early 2023

DEC will be re-issuing the MRGP permit in early 2023. The MRGP was issued for five years and will be expiring on January 26, 2023. The MRGP will be re-issued for a second five year term spanning approximately January 2023 to January 2028. During the re-issuance process there will be an opportunity for public review and comments. DEC is currently meeting with stakeholder organizations to gather input and draft permit amendments based on experiences with implementation of the existing standards. We will be seeking public review and comment in late summer or early fall of 2022. Stay tuned!

Municipal Grants-in-Aid (GIA) for Road Upgrades to MRGP standards

The Municipal Grants-in-Aid program made awards to towns in the fall of 2021, for funding under SFY22. These awards were for implementation projects in the 2021 and 2022 field season. It is anticipated that VTrans will again send letters to towns announcing the next round of GIA funding in the spring of 2022 for implementation of projects under SFY23. Grants will be awarded in late summer/fall allowing for implementation in the 2022-2023 field season. Towns receive grant funding to help them bring their connected roads up to MRGP standards. For more information visit the Municipal Grant-in-Aid website or contact Ross Gouin at ross.gouin@vermont.gov.

Government Transition from DUNS Number to New Unique Entity Identifier

By April 4, 2022, the federal government will stop using the DUNS number to uniquely identify entities. At that point, entities doing business with the federal government will use a Unique Entity Identifier (SAM) created in SAM.gov. The DUNS number will no longer work, and all reporting must be under the UEI.

All grant agreement and amendment requests sent to the Contract Administration (CA) Grants Team after April 4, 2022 must have the UEI listed on the Part 1 - Grant Award Detail in box 21 “Grantee DUNS #” field. Requests received with a DUNS number or a blank field will be returned to the requestor and be considered as not received.

Towns- Do you have any updates to your Town Officials lists?

Send your contact updates to IKay@Trorc.org. We’ll update our database so that we can share information directly with your Town’s Officials!
All towns are eligible to apply for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. Credit: Corinth by John Knox

Woodstock is just one of our 29 towns participating in the VTrans Municipal Roads Grants-in-Aid program. Credit: John Knox