Public Library Capital Projects Grants

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Two Upcoming Capital Project Grant Opportunities for Public Libraries

$16.4M U.S. Treasury Capital Projects Fund for Libraries

Goal: To address critical building improvements to ensure Vermonters have continued access to high-speed Internet to directly enable work, education, and health monitoring at their local public libraries.

$10M Public Facilities Preservation Initiative Grants

Goal: To provide resources to address repair and mitigation needs in small, rural public libraries that also serve as community meeting spaces and public facilities, with a focus on economically depressed areas.

https://libraries.vermont.gov/upcoming-capital-project-grant-funding-opportunities

$10M
Public Facilities Preservation Initiative Grants

Goal: To provide resources to address repair and mitigation needs in **small**, **rural** public libraries that also serve as community meeting spaces and public facilities, with a focus on **economically depressed areas**.

Current Status: The Department received a grant award letter and grant program guidance from HUD on March 2, 2023.

Timeline: HUD has established August 31, 2031, as the end date of the period of performance and budget period for all FY2023 CPF grants.

Funding Notes: HUD funding often requires an Environmental Review.

$16.4M U.S. Treasury Capital Projects Fund for Libraries

Goal: To address critical building improvements to ensure Vermonters have continued access to **high-speed Internet to directly enable work, education, and health monitoring** at their local public libraries.

Current Status: The State of Vermont is awaiting approval of the Department of Libraries' grant request from the U.S. Treasury.

Timeline: All funds must be expended by December 31, 2026, which is the end of the period of performance.

What types of projects will qualify for these grants?

The parameters of each grant program are still in development, however, however both of the Department's grant proposals included capital projects including improvements to ensure compliance with current minimum ADA requirements, HVAC system replacements, and structural and building envelope repairs including water infiltration and roof repairs.

That said:
The focus of the **U.S. Treasury grant funding** needs to specifically relate to ensuring the library can continue to provide **internet access** for at least 5 years into the future.

The **HUD grant funding** is specifically designated for **small and rural public libraries** in Vermont, and particularly those in economically depressed communities.

What is a rural library?

The Department is aware that there are many definitions of the term "rural," and that most of Vermont's libraries provide service to people who live in rural communities.

The Department will ultimately defer to HUD guidance related to the definition of rural when administering the HUD grant funds.

That said, for planning purposes the Department is considering libraries with a physical address

- outside of an urbanized area (population of more than 50,000),
- outside an urban cluster (population of more than 5,000), and
- with fewer than 2,000 housing units

to be in the "rural category", in keeping with the recent changes to the U.S. Census Bureau's definitions of urban and rural.

Guidance from Federal Funders and Statewide Goals

The Department is moving forward with our planning processes, but the reality is that we are still awaiting approval for one of our grant programs. We recently received extensive grant program guidance from HUD and are reviewing carefully.

As we learn more information, we may need to adjust our grant programs in order to comply with federal requirements.

We plan to build our program as inclusively as possible given the federal funding requirements of each grant source.

We also plan to develop an evaluation rubric to distribute these grant resources equitably throughout the state. For example, we plan to use the State of Vermont's Community Index as permitted by federal funders and will geographic distribution of funds will also be considered.

Needs Assessment

The Department has launched a Needs Assessment, which we hope *every* public library will complete by April 15th.

Through the Needs Assessment, the Department of Libraries is hoping to learn about the capital improvement needs at each municipal and incorporated public library in our state including:

- how many libraries have significant needs for capital improvements
- the type of capital improvements needed at each public library
- what stage each library is at in its planning process,
- what funding gaps each library has identified, and
- which known capital projects likely fit best with each of the federal grant opportunities.

How will the Needs Assessment be used?

- In the short term, information provided by libraries through the Needs Assessment will be used by Department staff primarily to inform the two federal capital grants projects that the Department will administer.

- In the long term, information provided in the Needs Assessment may also be used by the Department to understand future funding and resource needs.

- The information gathered through the Needs Assessment will also be shared with the Working Group on the Status of Libraries in Vermont, which is tasked with studying library facilities.

Needs Assessment Open February 28th through April 15th

Capital Project Needs Assessment:

https://libraries.vermont.gov/upcoming-capital-project-grant-funding-opportunities

Deadline Extension: April 15, 2023

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Capital Projects Grant Needs Assessment

Section 1

DISCLAIMER: This is a Needs Assessment about your library's anticipated capital projects. If your library is planning on applying for Federal Capital Project Grants administered by the Vermont Department of Libraries (VTLIB), we highly recommend completion of this needs assessment. **This Needs Assessment is not a grant application**. Completing this Needs Assessment does not guarantee that the projects you have identified and described will be awarded federal grant funds by the Vermont Department of Libraries. The data you provide in this Needs Assessment will be used by the Department of Libraries to gauge interest and readiness in applying for VTLIB's Federal Capital Project Grants and may be used to determine your project's eligibility to apply for these funds. Thank you.

Note: you can't save a draft of this form. You must submit it all in one session.

CONTINUE >

Is the Needs Assessment Required?

- Libraries that have no need for capital projects do not need to complete the Need Assessment.

- Libraries that are confident they will apply for the Capital Project Grant funding that the Vermont Department of Libraries will administer are **strongly encouraged** to complete this Needs Assessment by April 15th so that the Department has a good sense of the libraries with capital projects that are likely to seek funding.

- If a library misses the April 15th Needs Assessment deadline, they will be asked to complete the Needs Assessment as part of the Grant Application process.

Is the Needs Assessment a Grant Application?

The Capital Projects Needs Assessment is *not* a Grant Application.

Completing the Needs Assessment is not sufficient to apply for either of the federal grants the Department will administer.

Libraries that wish to apply for the Department's two capital projects grant opportunities will need to complete a separate **Grant Application** later this year.

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When will the Grant Application open?

- The Department will likely launch a combined **Grant Application** for the two Federal Capital Project Grants in the fall of 2023.

- The Department will share information about the **Grant Application** with all public libraries in the state via our regular listservs and webpage.

- The Department will also share information via its new capital projects-specific listserv: lib.capitalgrants@list.vermont.gov

- The Department will host a Grant Application webinar when the Grant Application goes live.

Where is your library in the process?

DREAM   DESIGN   BUILD

What does it mean to be "shovel ready"?

- "Shovel ready" projects are in an advanced enough phase of planning that they can begin construction right away – in as few as 3-4 months.
- Typically, shovel ready projects have:
  - Completed community meetings and project scope phases
  - Completed the design and architectural drawings phases
  - Completed necessary local, state, and federal reviews (environmental, historic preservation, ADA, etc.)
  - Have building permits are in place
  - May have already gone out to bid
- Shovel ready projects are ready to begin construction but may lack some funding that they need to begin construction – which is where these grants come in!

Get Ready!

- The more pieces you have in place by the time the grant application opens, the better. Do as much as you can locally to move your project closer to being "shovel ready."

- Use the Needs Assessment as a tool to help you identify where your library is in the capital project process.
    - · What next steps can you take to engage your library board and your community?
    - · What next steps can you take to move the project planning process forward?

- Use the capital project-related webinars and resource lists hosted by the Department of Libraries to improve your understanding the needs of your building and to begin working on materials to support your grant application.

https://libraries.vermont.gov/recordedworkshops

Get Ready!

- Per the federal Uniform Guidance, all institutions applying for federal Grants must have a **Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)**.
    - Municipal libraries should be using the UEI of their municipality.
    - Incorporated libraries should be using their own UEI.
- In addition to the UEI check, the Department must verify that an institution is "in good standing" with the state and federal government and eligible to receive grants.
- **Incorporated Libraries**
    - · Go to SAM.gov and make sure your UEI has a **full registration** and an **active status**.
    - · Set your UEI profile to **public** so the Department can verify UEI status.
    - · Confirm that your incorporation is in good standing, having completed all required reporting paperwork including the Subrecipient Award Report.
- **M**unicipal
    - · Connect with your town to obtain the town's UEI.
    - · Ask your town if their UEI has a **full registration** and an **active status**.
    - · Ask the town to set its UEI profile to **public** so the Department can verify UEI status.
    - · Ask your town to confirm that the municipality is in good standing, having completed all required reporting paperwork including the Subrecipient Award Report.

Get Ready!

- Find answers to any questions you may have about your library's governance and the ownership of your library building.

- You will need to answer questions in the Needs Assessment and Grant Application.

- You'll be required to provide documentation verifying that you have all necessary approvals to apply for and receive funding from these federal sources.

- If you are not sure if your library is municipal or incorporated:
    - Check your bylaws
    - Talk with your Board of Directors
    - Check with the Secretary of State's Office - incorporated libraries should have paperwork on file

Questions?

LIB.VTLIBCapitalGrants@vermont.gov