

Vermont Housing and Conservation Board
**GUIDELINES FOR PROJECT-RELATED
CAPACITY AWARDS FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS**
Adopted 5/7/04

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide some guidance to VHCB staff and board, along with potential applicants regarding funds referred to as Project Related Capacity funds. These guidelines are not meant to limit the Board's flexibility to respond to unusual circumstances.

Project related capacity funds are generally available for pre-development expenses in excess of the amount available from VHCB's Feasibility Fund. They are limited to projects that have a higher than normal level of complexity or uncertainty. Examples of factors that create this complexity or uncertainty include but are not limited to: an unusually large number of housing units, site challenges, the presence of multiple sites or multiple goals, unusual ownership structure or special population to be served, community economics or demographics that makes development of a project especially challenging.

Eligibility

Applicants must be mentioned as eligible in the VHCB enabling statute, that is, 501(c)(3) non-profits, municipalities, and limited equity cooperatives.

The applicant should be able to demonstrate site control if the application is for a specific site. If the purpose of the application is to identify and assess a number of potential sites site control is not necessary until such time as site specific work is to be undertaken.

Amount of Award

Awards shall generally be at or below \$50,000 per project. The Board may choose to exceed this amount in special cases or circumstances.

Types of Costs that can be Covered by Project Related Capacity Awards

A project related capacity award, assuming that the project meets the purposes outlined above, can cover costs including but not limited to: appraisals, preliminary architectural and engineering work, title search, historic preservation or hazardous materials analyses. In addition, project related capacity funds could be used for work with residents/residents organizations in large projects in which residents will have some degree of control over project operations. On a case by case basis the Board may also allow these funds to be used to cover staff costs of the applicant organization, especially if the organization would not have the ability to undertake the project if such expenses were not covered. Funds may be used to promote public dialogue about affordable housing or land conservation and/or to examine alternative land use scenarios through such means as site inventories and site plans as well as design charettes. At its discretion, the Board may also choose to make awards to cover expenses that are not outlined above.

Process

Applicants must complete a VHCB application for funding. Applications will be considered at regularly scheduled Board meetings and must meet the established deadline for consideration at a particular meeting.

In general, applicants for project related capacity funds should establish benchmarks to be met throughout the pre-development process. (This assumes that the establishment of benchmarks makes sense for the particular project or purpose for which an award is made.) Funds will be disbursed based on achievement of those benchmarks.