

# Apply to the Village Trust Initiative by 5/24 to Support Your Community's Revitalization

April 17, 2024



Villages are an essential part of your community, Vermont's identity, and their future. The **Village Trust Initiative** is a new program offered through a partnership of the Preservation Trust of Vermont, the Vermont Council on Rural Development, and the Vermont Community Foundation. It offers expertise and funding to help 20 small Vermont towns create or bolster a local [community trust organization](#) and take on a transformational project in the village. A small community is a town (not village) of fewer than 2,500 residents.

## What does this program offer?

The partners will work with you by:

- facilitating development of a new or existing community trust organization to lead project implementation.
- supporting robust community engagement and project prioritization.
- providing technical assistance (including contractor/consulting services) for pre-development work, such as determining project feasibility, engineering and/or design, permitting, cost estimation, budget and fundraising support, and more.
- providing initial funding (\$200,000 to \$450,000) and helping assemble other funding for project construction.

The community trust project could be the revitalization of a general store, the creation of a community center, improvements to the accessibility of an older town hall, renovation of a large historic home into village-scale housing, and more. Projects primarily focused on outdoor recreation and green space are not eligible. The community trust then can expand beyond their initial project to provide ongoing capacity to sustain village life, resilience and vitality.

The Initiative's first year will support approximately seven communities. Additional opportunities to apply will result in 20 communities receiving assistance through 2030.

## **How does my community or group apply?**

This program has a two-step application process. Applicants must submit an intake form by Friday, May 24, 2024, at 4 pm. After review of submissions and conversations with your group, the partners will invite some applicants to submit a full application.

## **What will make our application competitive?**

Communities will be most successful in the program if they:

- have an identified community need and demonstrated community support for the project.
- have an identified building or site in the village that could meet the identified need.

- have, or expect to have, site control.
- have, or expect to have, endorsement by the Selectboard to participate (documentation required).

## How can my community learn more?

To learn more and access the intake form, visit <https://ptvermont.org/village-trust-initiative>. Be sure to review the Frequently Asked Questions.

Participate in an online information session on April 30 at 10 am to learn more and ask questions. [Click here to register.](#)

If you have questions, you can contact Kaziah Haviland at [kaziah@vtrural.org](mailto:kaziah@vtrural.org).

## Where can my community find help with grant writing or management?

VLCT published a resource, [\*Increasing Municipal Capacity for Grants\*](#), that offers ideas for assistance with grant writing.

The Village Trust Initiative can provide project management assistance to program participants.