

July 21, 2025

**Village Trust Initiative -
Second Round Is Now Open
until September 5th**



The Vermont village is often recognized as an iconic hub of general stores, churches, and community gathering spaces where residents come together. These villages have no shortage of people who want their communities to thrive, and the Vermont village continues to be the stage of vibrant social life.

The **Village Trust Initiative** (VTI), made possible with a \$10 million Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) award from former Senator Patrick Leahy's office, fosters community driven revitalization of both the physical and social infrastructure at the foundation of the historical success of Vermont's small villages. The VTI launched in 2024, bringing seven communities into the program and supporting them with technical assistance and funding to create a Community Trust and take on a transformational revitalization project.

What This Program Funds

The Village Trust Initiative supports communities that want to form a Community Trust and undertake a transformational revitalization project in their historic village. The project



could be the revitalization of a general store, the creation of a community center, improvement of accessibility of an old town hall, renovation of a large historic home into village-scale housing, or other historic resource revitalization project.

Together, the Village Trust Initiative partners – the Preservation Trust of Vermont (PTV), the Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD), and the Vermont Community Foundation (VCF) – will:

- Facilitate the development of a new or existing community trust organization, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission focused on the vitality of the community, to lead the implementation of the project. Learn more about community trust organizations here: [What is a Community Trust?](#)
- Support robust community engagement and project prioritization.
- Provide technical assistance support for the pre-development work, such as permitting, feasibility, engineering, design, and more.
- Provide initial funding and help assemble other funding sources for the construction phase of a project.

How Your Community Applies

Visit ptvermont.org/village-trust-initiative to find the application link. **Applications are due by September 5, 2025.**

Make Your Community's Application Competitive

To participate in this program, your community must:



- Be a town of fewer than 2,500 residents based on the 2020 Decennial Census.
- Have an existing community trust organization or the desire to build one.
- Be interested in a revitalization project utilizing a historic resource or site in an established village environment. Greenspace and trails are not eligible.
- Have site control. Site control means that the community trust organization must either own the building OR have a long-term and well documented lease recorded in the town's land records. Applicants may also have a clear path toward site control at the time of application. If you have questions about site control, please connect with Nicole Gratton at nicole@ptvermont.org. VTI funds cannot be used for acquisition of a parcel or property.
- Have endorsement by the Selectboard to participate in the program (a motion in Selectboard meeting minutes or a letter indicating support).

To learn more and apply, visit: ptvermont.org/village-trust-initiative or contact Kaziah Haviland at kaziah@vtrural.org. The webpage has an excellent Frequently Asked Questions section.

Find Grant Writing or Grant/Project Management Help for Your Community

VLCT published a resource, [*Increasing Municipal Capacity for Grants*](#), that offers ideas for assistance with grants. Many of the capacity builders also provide project management services. Hiring experienced project management assistance can increase the speed of project development and help avoid cost, permitting, and other development surprises.

