

BERNARD SANDERS
VERMONT

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June 23, 2021

The Honorable Brian Schatz
Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development, and Related Agencies
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development, and Related Agencies
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Schatz and Ranking Member Collins,

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has a pecuniary interest in any of the congressionally directed spending items that I have requested in the Fiscal Year 2022 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, consistent with the requirements of paragraph 9 of Rule XLIV of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

Sincerely,



BERNARD SANDERS
UNITED STATES SENATOR

Sanders, Bernard(I-VT) Transportation Housing and Urban Development Congressionally Directed Spending Requests

Recipient Name	Project Purpose	Project Location	Amount Requested (\$000)
Vermont Housing and Conservation Board	<p>With the requested funding, the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) will implement the first step of the transformative 2020 Master Plan of the Tri-Park Cooperative Housing, located in Brattleboro, VT. Specifically, this funding would allow for the relocation of homes located in the flood plain and help stabilize the operations of this innovative housing cooperative. With a total of 333 mobile home lots that house over 800 low- and moderate-income residents, Tri-Park is Vermont's largest and longest operating resident-owned manufactured housing cooperative. Tri-Park makes up fully ten percent of the housing in Brattleboro and is one of the largest unsubsidized providers of affordable housing for low-income people in the state. Tri-Park's residents, infrastructure, and finances were severely damaged by Tropical Storm Irene in 2011 and remain at risk today. In fact, a decade later, many needed repairs and improvements have yet to be made due to lack of resources. Therefore, these vulnerable residents, many of whom are elderly and disabled, live with the daily reminder of the harm flooding can do, while remaining in direct threat of future flooding. This funding would enable new sites to be created to allow homes to be relocated out of the flood plain. Tri-Park proposes to move an existing structure and construct 16 mobile homes sites and necessary associated infrastructure. An additional 18 scattered infill sites will be developed in future phases as the full Master Plan is implemented. Further, funding will increase the resilience and sustainability of this critical low-income community for years to come. Vermont HUD Consolidated Plan Information:</p> <p>https://accd.vermont.gov/housing/plans-data-rules/hud</p>	Brattleboro VT	\$1,277
Champlain Housing Trust	<p>This project is a partnership between the Veterans of Foreign Wars' (VFW) Howard Plant Post 782, located in Burlington, VT and the Champlain Housing Trust (CHT), which is Vermont's largest and oldest affordable housing nonprofit. With the requested funds, the VFW and CHT would partner to transform the existing post into a veterans service center, which would include permanently affordable rental housing, some of which would be special purpose apartments targeted for veterans. CHT has significant experience partnering with community-based organizations to redevelop their sites to create new, vibrant community facilities. The Howard Plant VFW Post, located in Vermont's most populous city and in close proximity to Vermont National Guard headquarters, is well-situated to serve a proportionately large number of the Vermont veterans community. Together, CHT and the VFW will use this funding to build a new, four-story building at the VFW's current site to serve as the location for both the service center as well as new, permanently affordable apartments, with priority given to individual veterans and veteran families, including those experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless. The service center will expand programs to assist combat veterans with post-deployment reintegration, camaraderie, and assistance with obtaining VA health care and benefits. Further, the center will house a computer lab for professional and personal development training, a multipurpose room to be used for veteran-focused events and therapeutic program spaces. Vermont HUD Consolidated Plan Information:</p> <p>https://accd.vermont.gov/housing/plans-data-rules/hud</p>	Burlington VT	\$1,000
Cooperative Development Institute	<p>With the requested funding, the Cooperative Development Institute (CDI) will support the purchase and conversion to a limited equity cooperative of Breezy Acres and Hillcrest Manufactured Housing Communities in Colchester, Vermont by their residents. Together, the two communities are home to a total of 235 low- and moderate-income households. Grant funding is essential to preserving this affordable housing resource in one of Vermont's highest priced housing markets and to keeping lot rents perpetually affordable for low-income, elderly and disabled mobile home owners. This funding would account for the remaining nine percent of the total project costs, which will enable residents to avoid taking out additional loans to facilitate this ownership conversion. Without this funding, debt service would force mobile home lot rents to rise to \$530-\$550 per lot per month, the highest lot rents in the state and decidedly unaffordable for this low-income community. Additional Project Website Information:</p> <p>https://cdi.coop/hillcrest/</p>	Colchester VT	\$1,300

Vermont HUD Consolidated Plan Information:

<https://accd.vermont.gov/housing/plans-data-rules/hud>

Vermont Agency of Transportation	<p>The Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) is a four-season transportation and recreational trail that was initially established in 2013 by a congressionally-directed appropriation secured by Senator Sanders. Since then, the trail has served as a cornerstone for transportation, recreation, tourism, and economic development in a very rural and economically disadvantaged region of Vermont. While the trail is not yet complete, the segments that are open have quickly become community assets, supporting local recreation, transportation, and economic development. The requested investment would allow for essential user experience enhancements and community investments for the trail, and would be well-timed with the Vermont Agency of Transportation's plans for the completion of trail construction by the end of calendar year 2022. Upon completion, the trail will span 93 miles across northern Vermont. This funding would be distributed as matching grants to communities along the trail to develop projects to improve its function as a means of transportation for the public, including but not limited to trail infrastructure, such as trailheads, picnic areas, kiosks, and connections to downtowns; signage; art and history installations; marketing efforts; and ambassador programs. Additionally, this investment could fund a study and 10-year overarching master plan for the trail, which will include a recommendation as to whether the trail should ultimately become a state park. The LVRT has long been a priority in state planning, and it is also supported in Regional Planning Commissions' planning documents.</p> <p>Additional Project Website Information:</p> <p>https://vtrans.vermont.gov/about/stip</p>	Statewide VT	\$2,000
Vermont Housing and Conservation Board	<p>The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB), an instrumentality of the State of Vermont, administers the state's share of federal HOME and Housing Trust Fund dollars. Its highly successful Shared Equity Homeownership program creates permanently affordable homeownership opportunities that are resold at affordable prices. Homeownership grant funds provided by VHCB subsidize the cost of purchasing a home, helping the initial purchaser as well as future generations of homebuyers. In exchange for the purchase subsidy, the purchaser agrees to share increases in equity with the next buyer at resale, ensuring perpetual affordability. Working in partnership with Vermont's nonprofit housing network, VHCB has funded shared equity grants for over 1,300 homes and has assisted 1,862 households through the program. With the requested funding, VHCB would expand affordable, shared equity homeownership opportunities to low- and moderate-income Vermonters statewide. Specifically, this funding would allow VHCB to offer increased down payment assistance, access to funding for solar and energy efficiency upgrades, rehabilitation funding, and technical assistance to support the marketing of homeownership opportunities to historically and currently underserved communities.</p> <p>Vermont HUD Consolidated Plan Information:</p> <p>https://accd.vermont.gov/housing/plans-data-rules/hud</p>	Statewide VT	\$1,575
United Church of Underhill	<p>This proposal is a partnership between the United Church of Underhill and Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity to purchase a nine-acre parcel of land behind the church, subdivide the property into lots, and build approximately ten permanently affordable, shared equity homes. The project will bring new, affordable homeownership opportunities to a town where most homes are not affordable and the town plan calls for the creation of affordable housing. The homes will be maintained as affordable into perpetuity through subsidy covenants. The proposed homes will be located adjacent to a designated village center where concentrated housing is environmentally appropriate and consistent with state land use planning goals. The CDS investment will encourage economic and racial diversity in the costly and racially and ethnically homogenous Underhill-Jericho area. In addition to new affordable housing, the project will also conserve approximately two acres of open space for recreation, gardens, and other community purposes.</p> <p>Vermont HUD Consolidated Plan Information:</p> <p>https://unitedchurchofunderhill.com/</p> <p>https://vermonthabitat.org/</p>	Underhill VT	\$200

Vermont
Agency of
Transportation

The White River Junction Rail Station is Vermont's second busiest Amtrak station and serves as a rail gateway to eastern Vermont. Over 13,500 passengers use the station annually to reach the bi-state Vermont-New Hampshire micropolitan area of over 200,000 people. The rail station also serves as an economic development anchor in White River Junction's downtown area. The current White River Junction Station Platform is not compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act standards. This project will remedy accessibility deficiencies by reconstructing the platform to conform to all ADA access requirements.

White River
Junction VT

\$800