

Vermont Housing and Conservation Board

**GUIDELINES FOR THE AWARD OF
ASSOCIATED COST GRANTS FOR
AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION PROJECTS**

The Board's enabling legislation encourages the use of private or other funding sources in completing eligible projects. It is the policy of the Board to leverage, to the greatest extent possible, other sources of funding so that the public funds available to the Board can be used to complete the greatest number of eligible projects. While the Local Conservation Program is the only VHCB program with a prescribed match requirement, the Board encourages leverage on all types of projects including the donation of in-kind services, cash, bargain sales, land or easements. At the same time, the Board recognizes the need to cover reasonable associated costs for those projects which are unable to access additional funding sources. The Board may award grants for the purpose of developing projects and to cover reasonable associated costs based on the following guidelines.

PRE DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

1. Project Feasibility Fund

Staff may approve grants of up to \$10,000 from the Project Feasibility Fund to assist in the early phases of project development. General planning projects are not eligible for these funds. (See Project Feasibility Fund Policy.)

2. Project Related Capacity Grants

In unusual circumstances, when funds are needed to support staff and to conduct feasibility work prior to submitting an application for project funding, the Board may grant eligible applicants a Project Specific Capacity Grant. Applicants must be able to demonstrate to VHCB staff satisfaction that site control has been secured prior to the award of feasibility funds. General planning projects are not eligible for these funds. (See Organizational Development Grants Policy)

3. Farm Appraisal Fund

Staff may approve grants to share the cost of the appraisal of a farm project that has been approved by the Board as a pre-application.

FARMLAND CONSERVATION ASSOCIATED COSTS GRANT GUIDELINES

The Board encourages applicants to provide in-kind services to the greatest extent possible and encourages the use of other sources to fund associated costs. The amount of other funding sources or the extent to which VHCB funds have leveraged donations of services or interests in land may improve the chances of being funded by the Board.

Associated costs include staff costs, legal and closing costs, and the costs of mapping and documentation. Additional line items such as surveys or management plans may be approved when the Board finds such work is required to complete a project.

Farmland projects of statewide significance are eligible for associated costs of up to \$15,500. Local farmland conservation projects are eligible for associated costs of up to \$14,000. Both statewide and local farmland conservation projects are eligible for up to \$7,000 for Stewardship costs.

VHCB staff will have the flexibility to recommend additional funds on projects that are particularly complicated (such as those with complicated titles, multiple parcels, multiple towns or similar complications).

The Board will use these fee levels as a guideline and reserves the right to evaluate all project requests on a case-by-case basis.

Please use the attached budget format.

Vermont Housing and Conservation Board
CONSERVATION PROJECT BUDGET
INCOME AND EXPENSES

INCOME		EXPENSE			
			VHCB	Other	Total
VHCB Funds	_____	Easement	_____	_____	_____
Town Funds	_____	Grantee Staff	_____	_____	_____
Foundation Funds*	_____	Mapping/			
Other Funds*	_____	Documentation	_____	_____	_____
Bargain Sale	_____	Closing Costs	_____	_____	_____
Easement Donation	_____	Stewardship			
In-Kind Donations	_____	Endowment	_____	_____	_____
Federal Funds	_____	Value Donation	_____	_____	_____
		Other Expense*	_____	_____	_____
TOTAL	_____	TOTAL	_____		

*Describe

PRE-DEVELOPMENT COSTS TO VHCB

Describe any predevelopment costs already funded by VHCB not included in above expenses (Feasibility Grant, appraisal)

TOTAL PRE-DEVELOPMENT COSTS: _____

VALUE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS/ACREAGE CONSERVED

Appraised value of easement to be purchased	_____
Purchase price of easement	_____
Number of acres conserved	_____
Price per acre	_____
Value of donated easements	_____
Number of donated acres conserved	_____
TOTAL ACRES CONSERVED	_____
TOTAL PRICE PER ACRE	_____