



LAND ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY BOARD

Overview of Sunrise Report and Appropriation Request

by Seeding Power Vermont

Appropriation Request by Seeding Power Vermont

Seeding Power Vermont requests the Vermont Legislature ensure that the Land Access and Opportunity Board can continue its important work, as outlined in the sunrise report which calls for \$1.2 baseline funding for one year of operation, for the next four years through an appropriation of \$4.8 million which will set the board up for future success.

Overview of LAOB Sunrise Report Recommendations

- **Recommendation 1: Overview of LAOB Appropriation Request for SFY'24**

- Given the importance of this mission and the broad scope of work in front of the Board, it is critical to establish a baseline budget for the Board in the SFY'24 budget. Therefore, the Board requests an appropriation of \$1,200,000.00, as more fully detailed below and in the following subsections of these recommendations.

The requested appropriation would support continued LAOB operations and VHCB support, including the hiring of two full time, dedicated staff members. In addition, this appropriation will support the Board's ongoing work under the additional recommendations below for Staffing, Governance and Administration; Equity Assessment; Technical Assistance and Organizational Support Grants; Reparative Grants; and Miscellaneous Recommendations.

- Overview of Baseline Yearly Budget
 - Governance, Staffing and Administration: \$330,000.00
 - Equity Assessment of State Programs and Policies: \$160,000.00
 - Technical Assistance and Organizational Support Grants: \$320,000.00
 - Establish Reparative Grant Programs: \$300,000.00
 - Board Compensation and Access to SOV Facilities: \$90,000.00
 - Total: \$1,200,000.00

- **Recommendation 2 : Governance, Staffing, and Administration**

- The LAOB recommends that it continue to be structured as an independent instrumentality of the State of Vermont, with full authority to make decisions, enter into contracts, implement programs, make grants, all within the scope of its statutory mandate and funding authority, and continue to receive administrative support from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board.



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- **Recommendation 3: Conduct Equity Assessments and Recommend Improvements to Increase Access to State Investments and Supports for Housing, Land Access and Land-Based Enterprise**
 - Pursuant to 10 V.S.A. Sections 325u(f)(1), (4)-(6), and (8), a primary function of the LAOB will be to meet with the VHCB and other entities of State government, relevant partners, and stakeholders to frame goals for and conduct assessments of, and make recommendations related to State laws, regulations, policies, programs and investments.
- **Recommendation 4: Implement the Board's Authority to Deliver Technical Assistance and/or Organizational Support Grants to Entities Providing Technical Assistance**
 - Pursuant to 10 V.S.A. Sections 325u(f)(2)-(3), the LAOB will endeavor to recruit and retain the services of qualified Vermonters from historically marginalized and disadvantaged communities to assist individuals, families and collectives from historically marginalized and disadvantaged communities to navigate housing and land access; interface with credit agencies and financing entities; develop housing and land access "literacy"; and operate successful rural enterprises or ventures.
- **Recommendation 5: Continue Analysis and Fact-Finding, and Develop Key Partnerships with Parallel Programs in and out of Vermont, in order to Establish a Viable Reparative Grant Program to Support Vermonters from Historically Marginalized and Disadvantaged Communities to Access Housing, Land, and Land-Based Enterprise.**
 - The LAOB recommends that Vermont fund and direct the Board to establish working relationships with actors and officials in-jurisdictions like California, where the intent behind public policy initiatives is to establish general findings of harm that would be the basis for public investments in reparative grant programs without causing those who have been harmed to expose their past personal wounds and open up old scars to qualify for assistance. Likewise, in order to continue to establish a factual record in Vermont that supports such public policy progress, the LAOB recommends that it be funded and directed to work across sectors in Vermont to provide leadership and coordination with parallel efforts already established within the State.
- **Recommendation 6: Board Compensation and Access to Public Facilities**
 - The LAOB recommends that a new compensation structure be established for its appointed members who are not otherwise participating in this work as part of other public positions they hold. LAOB members should be compensated based on the amount of time expended in the serious and time-intensive work set before them.