

Outdoor Recreation Friendly Community Pilot Program

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Through our extensive public outreach, the VOREC steering committee heard from communities and regions throughout the state they are considering and/or actively pursuing outdoor recreation as a core economic growth strategy. We propose the development and funding of one pilot community (city, town, village or region) program that would support the planning and implementation of an “Outdoor Recreation Friendly Community” initiative.

Proposed Funding: \$100K GF

Legislation: Line item in the budget for Agency of Commerce Development, to be administered by the Community Development Division, in partnership with Forests, Parks and Recreation.

Administration: The pilot program may likely be attached to an existing community development program administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). By utilizing an existing DHCD program for granting and administration, overhead and start-up costs can be reduced.

Selection Criteria: A competitive proposal process would award funds for to one community. Criteria for selecting the pilot may include:

- Economic need
- Identification of outdoor recreation as priority in town plan or other pertinent planning documents
- Community commitment to an outdoor recreation vision: demonstrated support from community officials, the public, local business, and local and state-wide outdoor recreation non-profit organizations
- Communities with a good foundation of outdoor recreation assets already in place with strong potential for growth on both private and public lands
- Communities with good opportunities for connecting assets within the community and with assets of other nearby communities
- Communities with an existing solid network of local supporting businesses
- Communities with diverse and underserved populations

Scope of Work: The pilot program would support both planning and implementation. The scope of work performed would depend on the individual town/community selected and may include:

- Consultant work
- Stipend for technical assistance providers from the Outdoor Business Alliance and the Vermont Trails and Greenways Council (and other VOREC partners as needed)
- Mapping
- Securing access (land or easement acquisition)
- Implementation of public access improvements
- Stewardship support
- Marketing support
- Program administration

