

## CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION 10-YEAR PLANNING NARRATIVE

Fiscal Years 2022 – 2031

Please complete one form to accompany your capital budget request.

1. Agency: <u>Agency of Agriculture Food & Markets (AAFM)</u>

Department: \_\_\_\_Water Quality Division

**Capital Funded Program:** <u>Title 6, Chapter 215, Subchapter 3: Water Quality Financial Assistance Programs</u> (Best Management Practices Program, Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, Capital Equipment <u>Assistance Program</u>)

**2. Mission:** Please briefly describe the program's mission. Include high priority initiatives or goals from the agency strategic plan.

6 V.S.A. § 4821(a) Program created. A program is created to provide State financial assistance to Vermont farmers in support of their voluntary construction of on-farm improvements and maintenance of acceptable operating standards designed to abate nonpoint source agricultural waste discharges into the waters of the State of Vermont, consistent with goals of the federal Water Pollution Control Act and with State water quality standards.

The Best Management Practices Program funds agricultural water quality improvements on farms through the installation of production area practices (such as waste storage structures, improved barnyards, and waste transfer systems), equipment acquisition, engineering and design services, and conservation buffer installation.

The Capital Equipment Assistance Program provides assistance to contract applicators, nonprofit organizations, and farms to purchase or use innovative equipment that will aid in the reduction of surface runoff of agricultural wastes to State waters, improve water quality of State waters, reduce odors from manure application, separate phosphorus from manure, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, and reduce costs to farmers.

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program provides assistance to landowners to implement streamside vegetative buffers for 15 or 30 year agreements. The intent is to filter agricultural runoff and provide ecosystem benefits to the hydrologic network.

**3. Goals and priorities:** Describe the Agency/Department's long-term goals and priorities for the capital budget. Priorities should be developed and reviewed at several levels: 1) Departmental or functional priorities; 2) Fiscal priorities; and 3) Executive priorities.

Implement water quality improvement practices on farms that are eligible for the various statutory programs, Best Management Practice (BMP) Program, Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), and the Capital Assistance Equipment Program (CEAP) to address the various water quality goals outlined by the State as a requirement of a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) or other water quality plan.

**4. Internal and External Factors:** Describe key initiatives or challenges facing the agency/department/program in the next 10 years that may impact your capital needs. Include: what are the changes? Why are they occurring? When?

Farms are now receiving more inspections due to an increase in Agency staffing from Act 64 (VT's Clean Water Act) and it is bringing more projects into the programs. As the scrutiny on farms continues to increase as a means to meet water quality objectives through the implementation of conservation practices, the enrollment in the programs will remain consistent. The current challenges are the number of applicants versus the ability to plan and design all of the projects given the engineering staffing resources at the Agency. The Agency continues to work with USDA to create positions supported through a federal/state partnership and this is helping to address some of the workload demands.

**5. Assessment and projection of need:** Describe capital needs and projections based upon current and projected statistics on capital inventories and upon State demographic and economic conditions. (Due to factors described in 4 or for any other reason).

The estimated needs for capital funds are greater than the Agency's capacity, hence our request is balanced with the resource ability to implement the projects, not with the actual need on the ground. Each year the capital request is increasing by \$500,000 to gear up towards addressing more of the demand on an annual basis as engineering staffing become more seasoned and our program that works with private engineers improves allowing more projects to be implemented annually.

**6. Assessing Budgetary Impact:** Describe the financial burden and funding opportunities of programs and of *individual projects.* 

The impact of not supporting these programs is a failure to meet the requirements of the Lake Champlain Phosphorus Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), which is a commitment to EPA that is continuously reviewed by the environmental advocacy groups. The latest TMDL is a revision to an older TMDL and the revision was prompted by legal action taken by the Conservation Law Foundation based on the claim that the older plan was insufficient and part of that included the lack of funding commitment. The impact on not meeting these requirements is an incredible amount of time and energy spent on planning versus implementation should the advocacy groups trigger new legal actions.



### **CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION 10 YEAR PROJECT PROPOSAL** Fiscal Years 2022 - 2031

(One form must be completed for each Capital Project)

1. Program Title: Best Management Practices (BMP)/Capital Assistance Equipment Program (CEAP)/Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

#### 2. Program Mission that the Capital Investment Supports:

Agricultural water quality improvements on farms through the installation of production area practices (such as waste storage structures, improved barnyards, and waste transfer systems), equipment acquisition, engineering and design services, and conservation buffer installation.

3. Project Title: Agricultural Water Quality Implementation

4. Project Location: Statewide

#### 5. Project Description:

Assist farms in implementing capital improvements that directly improve water quality through several cost-sharing programs.

**PRIORITIZING CAPITAL PROJECTS:** Projects shall be prioritized on the following criteria: Priority 1: critical; Priority 2: Prior Capital Allocation or Commitments; Priority 3: Strategic Investments and Priority 4: future investments. (Definitions are provided in the attached capital budget priority criteria).

6(a).	Agency Ranking: 1	6(b).	Department Ranking:	6(c).	Project Priority: 2	
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7. **Project Priority:** These projects address all 4 categories.

8(a). Total Project Cost not a linear project 8(b). FY 2022 Capital Request \$3,436,109 8(c). FY 2023 Capital Request \$4,000,000

8(d). Cost to Complete after FY 2023 not a linear project 9. Prior Allocations: \$7,744,500 FY2020 & FY2021

10. Proposed Capital	Amount FY 2022	Amount FY 2023	Amount FY 2024	Amount FY 2025	Amount FY 2026	Amount FY 2027	Anticipated Funding Need for FY28-FY31
Cost Allocation:							
Capital Funds	\$3,436,109	\$4,000,000	\$4,500,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,500,000	\$6,000,000	\$30,000,000
General Funds							
<b>Other Sources</b> (i.e., state or federal)							
Total Funds	\$3,436,109	\$4,000,000	\$4,500,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,500,000	\$6,000,000	\$30,000,000

#### **11.** Operating Cost Allocations & Source of Funds

(Information provided will be coordinated with the Department of Finance and Management):

	FY 2022	Source	FY 2023	Source	FY 2024	Source	FY 2025	Source	FY 2026	Source	FY 2027	Source
Personal Services												
Operating												
Anticipate Fee for Space Cost												
New Positions Required												

#### **12.** Describe Other Sources and Amount of Available Funds for Operating:

**13. Effect on Program/Project if not funded:** The impact of not supporting these programs is a failure to meet the requirements of the Lake Champlain Phosphorus Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), which is a commitment to EPA that is continuously reviewed by the environmental advocacy groups. The latest TMDL is a revision to an older TMDL and the revision was prompted by legal action taken by the Conservation Law Foundation based on the claim that the older plan was insufficient and part of that included the lack of funding commitment. The impact on not meeting these requirements is an incredible amount of time and energy spent on planning versus implementation should the advocacy groups trigger new legal actions.

Submitted by: Laura DiPietro

\_Date: <u>10/14/20</u>\_Email: <u>Laura.DiPietro@vermont.gov</u>\_Phone No.: (802) 595-1990



# CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION 10-YEAR PLANNING NARRATIVE

Fiscal Years 2022 – 2031

Please complete one form to accompany your capital budget request.

#### 2. Agency: Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFM)\_

Department: Division of Agriculture Development\_

**Capital Funded Program:** The Vermont Building at the Eastern States Exposition (Big E) in West Springfield, MA: Continued Upgrades & Repairs

**2. Mission:** Please briefly describe the program's mission. Include high priority initiatives or goals from the agency strategic plan.

The Vermont Building at the Eastern States Exposition (Big E) provides an excellent opportunity for Vermont companies to exhibit and sell product to 1.6 million people annually. Participation in the Vermont Building at the Big E is an important marketing activity for almost 30 companies that participate on a yearly basis. The Vermont Building is an excellent platform to promote the Vermont brand, market the numerous tourism efforts, and to create a positive impression of Vermont upon the 1.6 million fair-goers who engage with the building and staff throughout the fair each September.

The Vermont Building is also a great example of cross Agency collaboration between the Department of Public Safety, the Agency of Agriculture, Department of Tourism and Marketing, and Buildings and General Services. As an outcome of the 2019 fair, BGS and the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets entered into a MOU outlining duties and expectations for the partnership moving forward.

**3. Goals and priorities:** Describe the Agency/Department's long-term goals and priorities for the capital budget. Priorities should be developed and reviewed at several levels: 1) Departmental or functional priorities; 2) Fiscal priorities; and 3) Executive priorities.

The Vermont Building at the Big E is nearly 100 years old and needs continued upgrades and restoration to maintain the safety and modernization of the building for all fairgoers and vendors.

In the most recent years, the Vermont Building has seen significant improvements to the interior, exterior, structure, and utilities. While these improvements have greatly improved the building, it is still in great need of continued and on-going maintenance.

The VAAFM in partnership with Buildings and General Services has been working on prioritizing the various maintenance issues and upgrades needed for the Vermont Building. Based on a thorough review of the maintenance audit completed in 2018, engagement with local and state building officials, visits to the building, and preliminary site work, we have identified three major areas of maintenance to conduct in FY22 and FY23. The three major areas of maintenance and repairs include:

- 1. Mechanical and Electrical Maintenance to include water heater replacement, upgrades to the restroom exhaust fans, and replacement of outdated electrical panels.
- 2. Structural & Safety Maintenance to include a design consultant to meet code requirements, repairs to the slate roof, replacement of the epoxy flooring, and replacement of the windows and mezzanine doors.
- 3. Interior Renovations to include painting as needed and upgrades to the vinyl flooring on the mezzanine level.

Finally, the VAAFM currently requires each vendor to pay a 12% commission, which yields an average of \$215,000 per fair year in a good economy. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 the 2020 fair was cancelled, this significantly reduced the expenses associated with a fair season, but it also eliminating income from the Big E.

4. Internal and External Factors: Describe key initiatives or challenges facing the agency/department/program

in the next 10 years that may impact your capital needs. Include: what are the changes? Why are they occurring? When?

Examples of areas to consider:

- Funding
- Population
- Legislation (state or federal)
- Organizational or operational changes (e.g., change in service delivery model, projected growth of employees, etc.)
- Partnering (e.g., public-private, public-public, etc.)

The Big E provides an outstanding opportunity for Vermont producers seeking out-of-state markets to sell their goods. In 2019, 27 businesses exhibited on the grounds throughout the 17-day fair selling more than \$1.97 million in goods, with many customers following up with additional business after the fair. As the volume of visitors and exhibitors increase, so does the need to perform building upgrades and routine building maintenance. Between 2016 and 2019 there was an increase of 275,000 people attending the Big E which increases the wear and tear on the building. In addition, the Vermont building remains outdated and in disrepair, which negatively impacts the visitor experience.

**5. Assessment and projection of need:** Describe capital needs and projections based upon current and projected statistics on capital inventories and upon State demographic and economic conditions. (Due to factors described in 4 or for any other reason).

Over the past 10 years, Buildings and General Services have invested roughly \$1M in building improvements, which included a redesign of the exterior of the building, landscaping, painting, roof patching, fire alarm improvements, structural improvements, and more. In 2021 and 2022 the Vermont Building spent a total of \$476,821 as allocated by the Legislature.

In 2019, the State of Massachusetts Building Inspector expressed concerns that the Vermont Building does not meet local building codes. This discussion spurred several meetings with the State Building Inspector as well as local officials to ensure that the Vermont Building is meeting all health and safety standards. As an outcome of these meetings, we have identified health and safety maintenance and repairs as priorities for FY22 and FY23.

**6. Assessing Budgetary Impact:** Describe the financial burden and funding opportunities of programs and of individual projects.

In FY15, VAAFM evaluated the funding source and sales commissions to determine if changes could be made to help cover expenses related to building maintenance and necessary upgrades. This evaluation indicated a slight change in how the sales commission structure could provide a more reliable level of funding to sustain both operation of the program and maintenance of the building. The sales commission structure was then changed from a sliding scale, based on revenue, to a flat rate of 12%. Due to exhibitor feedback, the flat rate was implemented over 3 years; 11% in 2015 and 12% in 2016. Today, the flat rate of 12% remains, with discussions to potentially raise in the future.

Without the necessary annual maintenance, the Vermont Building will fall further into disrepair with increasing deferred costs for maintenance. As a public facing building that generates almost \$2M in revenue each year, the investment in the quality of the building is ultimately an investment in marketing for Vermont. In addition, given the volume of people that this building welcomes, it is paramount that it meets building code requirements to ensure the health and safety of the visitors, exhibitors, and state employees.

Finally, BGS has been looking holistically at the various projects that need to be completed in the building. Instead of doing these as one offs and piecemeal efforts, we aim to anticipate the building needs and bundle like projects together to ensure that public funding is spent in the most efficient and effective way possible



# CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION 10 YEAR PROJECT PROPOSAL

Fiscal Years 2022 - 2031 (One form must be completed for each Capital Project)

**1. Program Title:** Vermont Building at the Eastern States Exposition (The Big E)

### 2. Program Mission that the Capital Investment Supports:

To support Vermont businesses, as well as the growth and viability of Vermont agriculture, by assisting with the necessary funding to carryout required maintenance and repairs to the Vermont Building at the Eastern States Exposition in West Springfield, Massachusetts.

3. Project Title: The Vermont Building at the Eastern States Exposition: Upgrades & Repairs

4. Project Location: West Springfield, MA

### 5. Project Description:

The VAAFM in partnership with Buildings and General Services has been working on prioritizing the various maintenance issues and upgrades needed for the Vermont Building. Based on a thorough review of the maintenance audit completed in 2018, engagement with local and state building officials, visits to the building, and preliminary site work, we have identified three major areas of maintenance to conduct in FY22 and FY23. The three major areas of maintenance and repairs include:

- 1. Mechanical and Electrical Maintenance to include water heater replacement, upgrades to the restroom exhaust fans, and replacement of outdated electrical panels.
- 2. Structural & Safety Maintenance to include a design consultant to meet code requirements, repairs to the slate roof, replacement of the epoxy flooring, and replacement of the windows and mezzanine doors.
- 3. Interior Renovations to include painting as needed and upgrades to the vinyl flooring on the mezzanine level.

					critical; Priority 2: Prior Capital Allocation or ded in the attached capital budget priority criteria).
6(a).	Agency Ranking: 2	6(b).	Department Ranking: 3	6(c).	Project Priority: 2
_	funding and ongoing annual allocations to			re the struc	ture and grounds of the Vermont Building are being met with
8(a).	<b>Total Project Cost</b> \$610,000	8(b).	FY 2022 Capital Request \$260,000	8(c).	FY 2023 Capital Request \$350,000

8(d). Cost to Complete after FY 2023 9. Prior Allocations:

10. Proposed Capital	Amount FY 2022	Amount FY 2023	Amount FY 2024	Amount FY 2025	Amount FY 2026	Amount FY 2027	Anticipated Funding Need for FY28-FY31
Cost Allocation:							
Capital Funds	\$260,000	\$350,000	\$235,000	\$225,000	\$45,000		\$2,750,000
General Funds							
Other Sources (i.e., state or federal)							
Total Funds	\$260,000	\$350,000	\$235,000	\$225,000	\$45,000		\$2,750,000

\$476,821

#### **11.** Operating Cost Allocations & Source of Funds

\$505,000

(Information provided will be coordinated with the Department of Finance and Management):

	FY 2022	Source	FY 2023	Source	FY 2024	Source	FY 2025	Source	FY 2026	Source	FY 2027	Source
Personal	0											
Services												
Operating	0											
Anticipate	0											
Fee for												
Space Cost												
New	0											
Positions												
Required												

#### **12.** Describe Other Sources and Amount of Available Funds for Operating:

Buildings and General Services received \$25,000 per year in maintenance funds. VAAFM will continue to reinvest the sales commissions in the maintenance of the building.

Submitted by: Abbey Willard



## CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION 10-YEAR PLANNING NARRATIVE

Fiscal Years 2022 – 2031

Please complete one form to accompany your capital budget request.

#### 3. Agency: Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFM)

Department: Division of Agriculture Development

Capital Funded Program: Agricultural Fairs & Field Days Capital Projects Competitive Grants Program

**2. Mission:** Please briefly describe the program's mission. Include high priority initiatives or goals from the agency strategic plan.

VAAFM facilitates, supports and encourages the growth and viability of agriculture while protecting human health, animal health, plant health, and consumers. Providing financial and technical assistance to Vermont's fairs and field days aligns with the Agency's mission and continues to educate the public in agricultural literacy, our state's agricultural heritage and the future of agriculture in Vermont.

This grant program funds capital improvement projects at Vermont's 14 agricultural fairs and field days, and assists in the continued celebration of the state's agricultural heritage with diverse offerings of entertainment and competitive exhibits showcasing livestock, fruits and vegetables, honey, maple, dairy, and other agricultural products.

**3. Goals and priorities:** Describe the Agency/Department's long-term goals and priorities for the capital budget. Priorities should be developed and reviewed at several levels: 1) Departmental or functional priorities; 2) Fiscal priorities; and 3) Executive priorities.

This is an extremely important program for the agricultural industry in Vermont, and the continued education of our youth and public about the working landscape. It is also an opportunity to celebrate our hard working farmers, growers, sugar makers and other community members who work tirelessly to make our agricultural fairs Vermont's own. In 2014, the legislature codified the Agricultural Fairs & Field Days Capital Projects Competitive Grants Program in 24 V.S.A Chapter 137 §5608. The funding that passes through VAAFM to assist the state's fairs is limited to this program and the stipend program, funded through the General Fund.

**4. Internal and External Factors:** Describe key initiatives or challenges facing the agency/department/program in the next 10 years that may impact your capital needs. Include: what are the changes? Why are they occurring? When?

VAAFM has received an annual appropriation that has allowed for the continuation of this capital grant program since 2014. In 2014, the legislature codified the Agricultural Fairs & Field Days Capital Projects Competitive Grants Program in Chapter 137 of title 24, which includes minimum eligibility to participate and a 15% matching requirement. In 2018, the program was administratively updated to require a 15% cash match. The fair organizations individually prioritize their capital projects and have the opportunity to annually apply for the capital grant funds. The capital improvement projects range from electrical and ADA accessibility enhancements, restroom and other building upgrades to grandstand restoration and public safety upgrades, all needed to provide a safe fair experience for fair goers and fair staff. The Capital Projects Competitive Grant Program provides a portion of the entire funds needed for long-term improvements to the fair and field day venues, and grant awards are anchor funds each fair utilizes to solicit more support from their community and county.

**5. Assessment and projection of need:** Describe capital needs and projections based upon current and projected statistics on capital inventories and upon State demographic and economic conditions. (Due to factors described in 4 or for any other reason).

In 2019, 342,421 people attended 13 Vermont agricultural fairs and field days. In this same year, the fairs spent over \$338,000 in improvements to their facilities, not including the funding they receive from the Agency of Agriculture. Hosting

multi-day fairs requires a significant amount of capital and human resources; in 2019 the fairs spent over \$3.7 million in operations and gave out more than \$414,000 in premiums to exhibitors in agricultural competitions. Without this grant program many fairs would not be able to implement their capital improvement plans.

**6. Assessing Budgetary Impact:** Describe the financial burden and funding opportunities of programs and of individual projects.

Our statewide agricultural fairs are an important education opportunity and community center for Vermonters. They also serve as an important tourist attraction and offer opportunities for the agricultural community to highlight their practices, products, skills, and livelihood that are part of the success of maintaining Vermont's working landscape. The Capital Projects Competitive Grant Program provides a portion of the entire funds needed for long-term improvements to these venues. Recipients are required to contribute matching funds, of at least 15% of the value of their grant, and each project shall have a minimum useful life of 30 years to be eligible under this program. These grant awards are the anchor funds each fair utilizes to leverage other funds and solicit community support through improvements to the infrastructure. VAAFM continues to champion for increased agricultural literacy among Vermonters and out-of-state visitors alike; these fair and field day events provide an effective vehicle for that engagement.



### CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION 10 YEAR PROJECT PROPOSAL

Fiscal Years 2022 - 2031 (One form must be completed for each Capital Project)

. Program Title: Agricultural Fairs and Field Days Capital Projects Competitive Grant

#### 2. Program Mission that the Capital Investment Supports:

To support Vermont businesses, as well as the growth and viability of Vermont agriculture, by assisting with the necessary funding to carryout required maintenance and repairs to the Vermont Building at the Eastern States Exposition in West Springfield, Massachusetts.

3. Project Title: Agricultural Fairs Capital Projects

4. Project Location: Statewide

### 5. Project Description:

The program provides competitively awarded capital funding for physical infrastructure improvements or new construction, as outlined in 24 V.S.A. §5608. Qualifying capital projects must be completed within two years from the start of the grant and the maximum grant award is \$25,000. The types of projects vary among fairs, but must have a minimum useful life of 20 years and may include new buildings or physical improvements to existing buildings; infrastructure improvements e.g. water, septic, electrical; safety code upgrades; ADA compliance projects; etc.

**PRIORITIZING CAPITAL PROJECTS:** Projects shall be prioritized on the following criteria: Priority 1: critical; Priority 2: Prior Capital Allocation or Commitments; Priority 3: Strategic Investments and Priority 4: future investments. (Definitions are provided in the attached capital budget priority criteria).

6(a). Agency Ranking: 3 6(b). Department Ranking: 6(c). Project Priority: 3

7. **Project Priority:** (Define the Project according to the "Priority Criteria") This is an annual recurring request. Our statewide agricultural fairs are an important Vermont attraction and community center. Offering opportunities for the agricultural community to highlight their practices, products, skills and livelihood to the rest of the state, Vermont's fairs are an integral part of the many pieces required to maintain our working landscape.

8(a). Total Project Cost \$200,000 annually + 15% match 8(b). FY 2022 Capital Request \$200,000

8(d). Cost to Complete after FY 2023 9. Prior Allocations: \$200,000 annually + 15% match \$200,000 annually

8(c). FY 2023 Capital Request \$200,000

10. Proposed Capital	Amount FY 2022	Amount FY 2023	Amount FY 2024	Amount FY 2025	Amount FY 2026	Amount FY 2027	Anticipated Funding Need for FY28-FY31
Cost Allocation:							
Capital Funds	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000		\$800,000
General Funds							
Other Sources (i.e., state or federal)							
Total Funds	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000		\$800,000

#### **11.** Operating Cost Allocations & Source of Funds

(Information provided will be coordinated with the Department of Finance and Management):

	FY 2022	Source	FY 2023	Source	FY 2024	Source	FY 2025	Source	FY 2026	Source	FY 2027	Source
Personal Services	0											
Operating	0											
Anticipate Fee for Space Cost	0											
New Positions Required	0											

#### **12.** Describe Other Sources and Amount of Available Funds for Operating:

There are no other sources of funds available to assist the state Agricultural Fairs & Field Days.

#### **13.** Effect on Program/Project if not funded:

Submitted by: Abbey Willard Date: 10/16/20 Email: abbey.willard@vermont.gov Phone No.: 802-272-2885