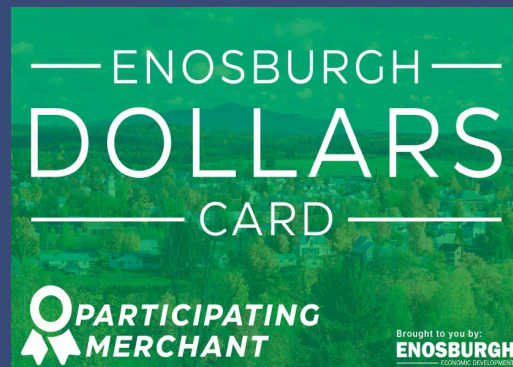


Agency of Commerce and Community Development

PROGRAM UPDATE: FEBRUARY 2021

Restart Vermont Regional Marketing and Stimulus Grant Program



The Restart Vermont Regional Marketing and Stimulus Grant Program was launched on August 19, 2020. The program was designed to provide grants to organizations for efforts and activities related to economic recovery, consumer stimulus, marketing, or tourism related projects to support businesses that have suffered economic harm due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Funded was provided by an allocation of the Federal Coronavirus Relief Fund.

Restart Vermont Regional Marketing and Stimulus Grant Program SUMMARY

The Restart Vermont Regional Marketing and Stimulus Grants were intended to enable local, regional, or statewide organizations to implement campaigns and initiatives that increase consumer spending, support local businesses, and advance community recovery efforts to support businesses in Vermont that have suffered economic harm due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. All data reported is as of 1/25/21.

Maximum Grant Award	Applications Received	Applications Awarded Funds	Total Grant Funds Awarded
\$10,000	70	61	\$589,039

The application deadline for Vermont communities and organizations interested in participating was August 31, 2020. Eligible applicants included downtown organizations, chambers of commerce, regional development corporations, local and municipal economic/community development departments and committees, statewide business organizations, or other similar groups. FAQs on eligibility and use of funds were made available on the [ACCD website](#). Multiple applicants partnered with other local organizations or municipalities.

Types of Applicants Receiving Awards



Awards By County

Addison	4
Bennington	7
Caledonia	1
Chittenden	9
Essex	1
Franklin	3
Orleans	4
Rutland	8
Washington	6
Windham	7
Windsor	4
Statewide	7



Restart Vermont Regional Marketing and Stimulus Grant Program PROGRAM DESIGN, FUNDS LEVERAGED AND USE OF FUNDS

Communities and organizations that received grants planned buy local marketing initiatives that fell into four primary categories: advertising campaigns; contests and passport programs; events; and local currency programs. Most grant recipients planned multiple, overlapping initiatives. See pages 5-10 for a list of grant recipients and descriptions of community programs implemented.

Advertising Campaigns	Contests and Passport Programs	Events	Local Currency Programs
16	12	4	29

To maximize program impact, many recipients sought additional financial support from local partners in the form of contributions or in-kind services in addition to grant funding. As in-kind support was not required, it is possible more in-kind was obtained but not reported. Many grant recipients that implemented a local currency program also sold incentives to increase the amount of financial support for local businesses.

Recipients provided incentives to consumers in the form of gift cards or certificates, prize packages, and raffle items purchased from local businesses. Coupled with local currencies, the total amount of incentives paid out to consumers was \$368,216.

Financial Support Leveraged by Grants	In-Kind Support Reported	Sales of Local Currency	Incentives Provided to Consumers from Grant Funds	Total Incentives Provided to Consumers (includes Local Currency)
\$44,949	\$37,001	\$50,197	\$318,019	\$368,216

The grant funding provided also supported local businesses used to implement and market the consumer stimulus programs in each community.

Print and Production Services (printers, designers, photo/videographers)	Media Services (primarily local newspaper and radio, also includes social media)	Misc. Services (supplies, postage, finance or software service fees)
\$136,900	\$181,954	\$12,837



Restart Vermont Regional Marketing and Stimulus Grant Program IMPACT ON COMMUNITIES

In addition to program details, funds leveraged, and costs incurred, grant recipients were required to provide as accurate an estimate as possible on the consumer spending achieved as a result of these promotions. Based on self-reporting by recipients, the incentives generated an additional \$902,736 to date in local consumer spending. As only 44% of grant recipients were able to provide consumer spending estimates, these totals are considered to far underrepresent the economic impact generated.

Additional Consumer Spending Generated	Percentage of Recipients Reporting Consumer Spending	Total Financial Benefit to Local Businesses (Incentives plus Spending)	Total Grant Funds Awarded	Preliminary ROI
\$902,736	44%	\$1,270,952	\$589,039	116%

From reporting data received, over 3000 Vermont businesses participated in the consumer stimulus efforts of local communities. While some communities and organizations chose to focus on specific sectors, the impact was broadly felt by local businesses across the state. Fully 100% of program participants either agree or strongly agree that their community benefited, with complete feedback provided on pages 11-16.

Businesses Participating	Economic Sectors Targeted by Communities						
	Arts and Culture	Attractions	Lodging	Restaurants and Food	Retail (non-food)	All	Other
3,334	17 (34%)	8 (16%)	10 (20%)	26 (52%)	27 (54%)	14 (28%)	4 (8%)

Program Assessment by Participants	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree
Participating businesses and organizations saw a benefit from our promotion	77%	23%	0%
Aspects of our promotion can/will be used for future promotions	60%	38%	2%
Our promotion was successful enough that we plan to repeat it, even if there isn't a grant	43%	34%	23%



Restart Vermont Regional Marketing and Stimulus Grant Program

GRANTS AWARDED

A total of 61 grants were awarded, with 90% of grant recipients requesting and receiving the full \$10,000 maximum award amount.

Grant Recipient	Description of Regional Marketing and Consumer Stimulus Program
Addison County Chamber (in partnership with Middlebury, Bristol and Vergennes)	"10 Day, \$35k Giveaway!" promotion in the three downtowns to encourage shopping and dining. Supported by local marketing.
Barre 2000 & Beyond	"Barre Bucks" program accepted at participating Barre merchants during 4th quarter supported by local marketing
Bellows Falls Downtown Dev Alliance	"BF Bucks" distributed throughout the area school districts and at area businesses. Each student given a \$5 card with instructions on how and where to spend their cards.
Better Bennington	Three promotions: public art exhibit, "downtown dollars" promotion, digital marketing campaign
Big Heavy World	Campaign of artist-presented audio and video PSAs and programs promoted by the VT Assoc of Broadcasters highlighting specific incentives, incl. those that drive consumers to local music stores and independent artists.
Brandon Area Chamber (Rutland, Brandon, Killington, Castleton, Poultney)	"Real Brandon Bucks" for \$10 off a purchase of \$30 or more; supported by local marketing
Brickhouse Studios (Art Hound Gallery, Essex)	4 initiatives: \$5 gift card for every \$20 spent; drawing for \$20 gift cards; \$5 coupons redeemable with \$25 purchase; "Artist Treasure Hunt Passport" to earn gift card prizes. Supported by local marketing.
Brighton Community Forum	Consumer incentive program focused on shopping, dining and lodging in Island Pond/Brighton. Coupons for \$10 off \$20 or more; coupon for \$25 off a stay in local lodging. 2 weeks in October. Supported by local marketing.
Bristol Downtown Community Partnership (with Middlebury, Bristol and Vergennes)	"10 Day, \$35k Giveaway!" promotion in the three downtowns to encourage shopping and dining. Supported by local marketing.
Burlington Business Association	"SaveLocalVT Auction" program paid local retailers, restaurants, hospitality, and entertainment businesses for gift cards and products offered to the community via an on-line auction program. Supported by local marketing.



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Grant Recipient	Description of Regional Marketing and Consumer Stimulus Program
Catamount Film & Arts / VT Curators	Promotional video and modified passport program for VT museums and galleries. Supported by local marketing.
Center for Agricultural Economy	Promoted 1-3 day "TREK the NEK--Bike to Barn" tours of the NEK. Supported by local media promoting "staycations" in NEK.
City of Burlington	"Love Burlington Challenge:" 4-week shopping event with prizes purchased locally. Purchases qualified participants to enter to win weekly prizes. Supported by local marketing.
City of St Albans	Gift cards and "Downtown Dollars" spent at 33 participating local businesses. Supported by local marketing.
Dorset Chamber of Commerce	Local and regional marketing campaign focused on increasing consumer spending in lodging, dining, and retail establishments in Dorset.
Downtown Brattleboro Alliance	Relaunch of locally known "BrattleShip" interactive game to increase downtown business activity. Supported by local marketing and gift card incentives.
Downtown Rutland Partnership	2-month retail passport program with 15 downtown shops. Drawing for prizes at the end of the program. Supported by local marketing.
Downtown Winooski	Daily drawing throughout October for gift cards to food establishments. Supported by local marketing.
Economic Development Dept / Town of Dover (Wilmington and Dover)	"Stay and Play Deerfield Valley" 1-month program: consumers who purchase gift certificates to lodging businesses gift certificates to dining and retail establishments that they can use during their stay.
Hartford Area Chamber	"Hartford Dollars:" \$30 - \$50 gift certificates for participating Hartford restaurants, retail and lodging businesses. Supported by marketing campaign.



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Grant Recipient	Description of Regional Marketing and Consumer Stimulus Program
Jay Peak Area Chamber	Highly discounted ski packages (passes, gift cards to retail and food establishments) sold to increase visitors. Supported by marketing campaign.
Killington Pico Area Association (Rutland, Brandon, Killington, Castleton, Poultney)	"Real Killington Bucks" for \$10 off a purchase of \$30 or more; supported by local marketing
Lake Champlain Regional Chamber	Additional support to the state's Buy Local Vermont Gift Card program; Partnering with Nift; \$30 gift cards for participating Chittenden and Grand Isle County businesses. Supported by local marketing.
Localvore Inc	App-based "Localvore Passport" for discounts to Burlington restaurants. Supported by local marketing.
Mad River Valley Chamber (Stowe, Waterbury, Mad River Valley Chamber)	"Best of Route 100" Holiday Experience: marketing campaign with shopping, dining & lodging incentives. 3-town partnership
Merck Forest & Farmland Center (with Shires Outdoor Adventure Recreation)	Increase marketing collateral, literature and campaign of recreational assets within Southwestern VT
Middlebury Business Association (with Middlebury, Bristol and Vergennes)	"10 Day, \$35k Giveaway!" promotion in the three downtowns to encourage shopping and dining,
Montpelier Downtown Community Assoc	Seven Days promotional campaign with prize drawings for participating purchases at local merchants.
New England Newspaper Inc	Hosting online digital marketplace ("ShopLocal Community Holidays") for 75 southwestern Vermont businesses.
Newport City Renaissance (Newport, Derby Line, Orleans, Derby, Morgan, and Holland)	"Downtown Dollars" incentive + additional dollars sold to consumers for use at participating local businesses. Supported by local marketing.



Restart Vermont Regional Marketing and Stimulus Grant Program

GRANTS AWARDED

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Grant Recipient	Description of Regional Marketing and Consumer Stimulus Program
Okemo Valley Regional Chamber (with Weston Community Association, Londonderry, Chester)	Regional digital advertising in Yankee Magazine; regional map; regional video.
Poultney Area Chamber (Rutland, Brandon, Killington, Castleton, Poultney)	"Real Poultney Bucks" for \$10 off a purchase of \$30 or more; supported by local marketing
Randolph Area Community Development Corp	Created business guide containing info on merchants open for businesses along with Covid-related conditions, such as curbside service. Also "Randolph Community Dollars" and a raffle. Supported by local marketing.
Revitalizing Waterbury (Stowe, Waterbury, Mad River Valley Chamber)	"Best of Route 100" Holiday Experience: marketing campaign with shopping, dining & lodging incentives. 3-town partnership
Rutland Area Arts / Chaffee Art Center	Marketing local art walk and farmers' market; issue Nift buy local gift cards; local marketing campaign
Rutland Economic Development Corp (Rutland, Brandon, Killington, Castleton, Poultney)	"Real Rutland Bucks" for \$10 off a purchase of \$30 or more; supported by local marketing
Shires DMO	Buy local gift card giveaway and marketing campaign
Southwestern Vermont Chamber	Video marketing campaign based on Facebook/Instagram to boost travel to the area when it was still allowed.
Stowe Area Association (Stowe, Waterbury, Mad River Valley Chamber)	"Best of Route 100" Holiday Experience: marketing campaign with shopping, dining & lodging incentives. 3-town partnership
Studio Place Arts	Marketing and map production for "Rock Solid" stone sculpture art walk to increase downtown Barre visitation
Swanton Enhancement Project	Gift card giveaway distributed first to local food shelves, schools, faith groups, and the Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi Tribal council to provide the gift cards first to households with the greatest need.



Restart Vermont Regional Marketing and Stimulus Grant Program GRANTS AWARDED

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Grant Recipient	Description of Regional Marketing and Consumer Stimulus Program
The Guild of VT Furniture Makers	Improving and increasing statewide social media marketing and expanding organization website for better marketing.
Town of Bennington	Marketing support for "Garlic Town USA" event, the Covid-safe version of the huge annual "Garlicfest"
Town of Castleton (Rutland, Brandon, Killington, Castleton, Poultney)	"Real Castleton Bucks" for \$10 off a purchase of \$30 or more; supported by local marketing
Town of Chester (Okemo Valley Regional Chamber, Weston Community Association, Londonderry)	Regional digital advertising in Yankee Magazine; regional map; regional video.
Town of Enosburg	"Enosburg Dollars" program for local merchants. Supported with local marketing. Selectboard adopted it for next year.
Town of Essex (Essex and Essex Junction)	Weekend-long "Essex Out & About:" gift card giveaway for local businesses. Also paid 16 bands to provide entertainment throughout weekend
Town of Hinesburg	"Hinesburg Bucks" program with local marketing support
Town of Londonderry (Okemo Valley Regional Chamber, Weston Community Association, Chester)	Regional digital advertising in Yankee Magazine; regional map; regional video.
Town of Rockingham	Video marketing campaign highlighting local restaurants and retail
Town of Weston (Okemo Valley Regional Chamber, Weston Community Association, Londonderry, Chester)	Regional digital advertising in Yankee Magazine; regional map; regional video.



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Grant Recipient	Description of Regional Marketing and Consumer Stimulus Program
Vergennes Partnership (with Middlebury, Bristol and Vergennes)	"10 Day, \$35k Giveaway!" promotion in the three downtowns to encourage shopping and dining,
Vermont Attractions Association	App-based, month-long passport at participating attractions in 12 counties. Supported by marketing campaign
Vermont Brewers Association	Revived "VT Brewery Challenge Passport" that had been shut down due to Covid.
Vermont Crafts Council	Provided support to dozens of individual artisans to help them market their work. Included training and coaching on marketing skills.
Vermont Outdoor Business Alliance	Produced guide promoting 90 local outdoor retail, brands, facilities, guides, and hospitality businesses, including ~\$1200 in customer incentives to Vermonters and allowed visitors.
Vermont Vaudeville	Marketing support for weekend of NEK outdoor events in September.
Vermont's North Country Chamber (Newport, Derby Line, Orleans, Derby, Morgan, and Holland)	"Downtown Dollars" incentive + additional dollars sold to consumers for use at participating local businesses. Supported by local marketing.
Village of Essex Junction (Essex and Essex Junction)	Weekend-long "Essex Out & About:" gift card giveaway for local businesses. Also paid 16 bands to provide entertainment throughout weekend
Wilmington Works (Wilmington and Dover)	"Stay and Play Deerfield Valley" 1-month program: consumers who purchase gift certificates to lodging businesses gift certificates to dining and retail establishments that they can use during their stay.
Woodstock Area Chamber	Passport program for downtown merchants during 4th quarter with final prize drawing. Supported by local marketing.



Restart Vermont Regional Marketing and Stimulus Grant Program TESTIMONIALS AND GRANT RECIPIENT FEEDBACK

WINOOSKI: I am reaching out to say thank you so much to you and the whole team for administering the Regional Marketing grant. This funding came to Downtown Winooski at a time when we desperately needed to publicly advocate for and promote our business community as well as uplift and celebrate our city. I underestimated how much the marketing and advertising campaign would both strengthen the business community's connections to each other but also their connection to our organization. We worked with 31 individual businesses to promote their offerings through gift card/certificate giveaways, but we heard positive feedback from businesses, organizations and community leaders throughout the city who were thrilled with the campaigns promoting Winooski as a whole. Customers from Winooski and the surrounding areas were not only reminded about the high-quality businesses in Winooski, but they greatly appreciated the positive, celebratory messaging. It truly buoyed our community. We will continue to feel the ripple effects of this grant for many months. We will also certainly use the infrastructure and physical materials created as a result of the grant. The impact has been tremendous, and we greatly appreciate the State of Vermont's support.

VERGENNES: Businesses were very pleased with this promotion, especially since it had a double impact: a shopping incentive for both the retailers giving out the currency and the businesses receiving the currency. While a repeat of the promotion would benefit and boost our downtown businesses, it's unrealistic that we would ever be in a financial position to produce this program on our own without grant funds. Consider offering this grant program twice per year to stimulate the economy in a variety of seasons. Please also include administrative costs in future grant programs as this was costly for us to administer.

BURLINGTON: This was very successful for us and we are so appreciative! I would love to see the other initiatives put on through this grant and their results to get inspired for future efforts.

VERMONT BREWERS ASSOCIATION: The timeline for spending was tight. Our program will continue in 2021 with the merchandise we have on hand from the 2020 grant spending.



Restart Vermont Regional Marketing and Stimulus Grant Program TESTIMONIALS AND GRANT RECIPIENT FEEDBACK

BRICKHOUSE STUDIOS/ART HOUND GALLERY, ESSEX: Suggestions for Improvements: 1) A VT State platform to amplify what initiatives are going on. 2) This program is directly scalable to the amount of grant funding received. We were able to directly bolster local media, production suppliers, our represented businesses, and the consumer. This was a win-win for all. A renewal of this grant with even more grant funds would make sense. It simply worked. 3) Quicker funding and longer promotion period.

NEWPORT: We would love to be able to offer this again in the future, it really benefited the general public just as much as the local businesses.

VERMONT'S NORTH COUNTRY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE: The financial support to incentivize consumers was critical. Our partnership "Business Bucks" program (Newport Chamber & NCDD) sold \$30,000 of incentive dollars to community customers in 24 hours. Offering a 50% discount, we were able to double the purchasing power of the consumer and it went directly to local businesses in need. We noted we could have easily sold \$50,000-60,000 of the "Business Bucks." We feel this program can be replicated by any community. We are discussing a similar program this spring with the support of local sponsors. A recommendation is to offer another grant round with a requirement to get a match from local sponsors.

DOVER: Our program was to drive lodging reservations by offering packages to retail/restaurant. Due to the increased restrictions on out of state travel we were not able to see the immediate return we would have seen in the summer when there was more travel occurring. Our properties have retained their packages and feel that they will benefit when there is more out of state travel allowed, so we expect to see a three-fold return in the spring based on these numbers.

WOODSTOCK: It was a very positive program. Thank you.



Restart Vermont Regional Marketing and Stimulus Grant Program TESTIMONIALS AND GRANT RECIPIENT FEEDBACK

DORSET: This allowed us to develop marketing materials and content that we will be able to use well into the future. In addition, it allowed us to have valuable content to connect locals to the local economy.

SOUTHWESTERN VERMONT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE: Grant program was terrific, extremely user friendly, quickly and efficiently administered. We strongly encourage any additional stimulus funds be considered for “regional” marketing efforts in partnership with the State. We were able to do a program that brought bottom line impact to many businesses; something we could not have done without the grant. We were able to bring stimulus dollars down to a local effort not only to promote business and put cash into our businesses, but to bring collaboration, solidarity among business owners and the community.

STUDIO PLACE ARTS, BARRE: The paperwork for this program was created for traditional "small businesses" and not for nonprofit organizations. Also, many benefits/values don't cross the traditional marketplace and there should be an opportunity to articulate these.

ENOSBURGH: Suggestions for Improvements: More defined metrics. We used % increase rate of visitors and % increase of spend. Rather than a hard number. We didn't want to burden the business owners with homework or keeping track a detailed data. Overall, the grant program and the Enosburgh Dollars program was a successful pilot, and we look forward to bringing it back again next year, bigger and better!

BARRE: We heard only positive responses from this program from businesses and consumers. We hope to do this program again in the future.

OKEMO VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE: Our project was successful in creating a plan for the benefit of all communities, businesses, and citizens in the region. This collaboration was fun, having more time to convene partners and assess needs would be great for the next partner. Thank you!



Restart Vermont Regional Marketing and Stimulus Grant Program TESTIMONIALS AND GRANT RECIPIENT FEEDBACK

GUILD OF VT FURNITURE MAKERS: This was a helpful short-term boost in social media outreach. The SEO improvements to our website should yield improvements in website traffic over the longer term. Funding for similar social media outreach is always appreciated and the need ongoing.

WATERBURY: The timeframe from receipt of the funds to end of program was too tight to make a quality program. It was also difficult to launch during the holiday season when shopping is already happening. It is best to run an incentive program at a time of year when businesses are looking for increased traffic - such as shoulder seasons.

JAY PEAK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE : If we had received the grant sooner, we may have to exact data to report back. It is too early to truly gather hospitality data as many bookings and activities were not available during the holiday timeframe due to already existing reservations and limited offerings. We did our best to "guesstimate" outcomes from speaking with our lodging partners, restaurants, shops, and area activities. Chamber membership is down tremendously due to Covid, the businesses that participated were very grateful.

RUTLAND: The process was very easy to apply and receive funding. Thank you!

RUTLAND: Everything from an administrative standpoint went incredibly well! We took this as a collaborative approach with four other surrounding towns, but we were the only town that had only restaurants as the participating industry. Having seen this through now, I would highly recommend programs shift towards retail (or restaurants that have standard "to go" options) as their industry of choice. The other four towns that we collaborated with on this effort had a much better mix of businesses than we did and did incredibly well while our program wasn't as successful. We believe that given that many people chose retail as over restaurants to participate in this because they could do their holiday shopping in advance, keep their mask on the entire time, and have broader purchase options. We are incredibly grateful for the opportunity to allocate the use of our remaining funds for a Buy Local Campaign.



Restart Vermont Regional Marketing and Stimulus Grant Program TESTIMONIALS AND GRANT RECIPIENT FEEDBACK

VERMONT CURATORS GROUP: Because of the success of our efforts, we will be extending our 2020 Vision Passport Program promotional campaign through the summer of 2021 and the benefits provided by this grant will be felt through that time. The timeline of our project was difficult to fit into the grant timeline, and a longer and more flexible project period would be appreciated. However, we would not have had the funding to support local media advertising without this grant - it was very valuable for our efforts!

BRIGHTON: While it was out of your control this time, more time to roll out such an ambitious program would definitely be helpful. This was a great program, and our businesses are very thankful for the assistance. We are hopeful that the economic boost will help the businesses to survive the challenging months ahead. Thank you so much from everyone in Island Pond!

LOCALVORE: It would have been ideal to get the grant sooner to have more time given the time constraint with CARES Act requirements although we understand there was and is a lot going on. We also would recommend a much larger pool for subsidized digital vouchers to make a larger impact on the network effect. This would have also helped us reach all geographies in Vermont as we are doing with Everyone Eats to make it a true statewide program. Overall, there is a case study here that proves it's an obvious positive economic impact for all parties involved. Our biggest recommendation is to communicate directly with us so that our collaborative efforts can make this the biggest benefit for the entire community.

VERMONT OUTDOOR BUSINESS ALLIANCE: The report did not ask for these social media metrics, but they are important: 19,000 print copies distributed in 7 states 10,124 views of the article on www.vtsports.com. 18,236 views via newsletters. One local partner reporting highest social media engagement ever (from average 150-200 to 1500). Participating businesses will see economic benefit from the VOBA marketing and incentive effort for another 8-12 weeks, so the timeframe was too short to accurately report the consumer purchases of the promotion.

BENNINGTON: This was a great grant program, and we don't have suggestions for improvement at this time.



Restart Vermont Regional Marketing and Stimulus Grant Program TESTIMONIALS AND GRANT RECIPIENT FEEDBACK

RANDOLPH: Realizing that the time frames were not completely under the State's control, the roll-out of CARES Act funding and the confusion around the initiatives ahead of decisions was very chaotic and time consuming at a time when we were already overwhelmed trying to respond to the crisis on many levels. Please consider that the organizations and people in them are also impacted. Longer lead times; more clarity (don't make us respond to speculative proposals), and support for the organizations and communities in addition to those we assist. The regional conversations we had were great, so if there is support to help us act regionally (which will take a lot of work, but would provide long-term benefits) is worthwhile, but again, have it make sense on the ground and provide enough incentive to make it feasible. THANK YOU!!

VERMONT ATTRACTIONS ASSOCIATION: VAA is very grateful for the award. It allowed the membership to try a new form of promotion that we will likely use in the future. Due to the nature of the funding the timeline from award to implementation to completion was a bit of a sprint. In the future, if a longer lead time is possible, it would make for a smoother implementation of a statewide program.

BENNINGTON: The flexibility of this grant is what helped make it successful. The fact that it was meant for "marketing" purposes during a very difficult time to market to non-locals made it a precarious activity for us to organize, however, we believe we successfully accomplished what our merchants were hoping we could.

BRATTLEBORO: This grant program was AMAZING. The participating businesses were incredibly grateful to have a program that they didn't need to pay to play. All of my areas of possible improvement revolve around how WE implemented it, not how you distributed/oversaw what have you. The short time frame from finding out we got it to having to implement was a struggle in October. Gaining energy/involvement from weary and stressed-out merchants/restaurant owners proved challenging at times. I'd love to explore even more online sales options incentives because Brattleboro folk are STRICT with staying home-great for public health in a pandemic, less so for promoting shopping. Mostly, I'd just like to say THANK YOU! This was a dream to work on.

