



Jefferson County
Planning & Community Development

Get Grant Ready Workshop

175 Arsenal St. 2nd Floor
Conference Room
September 9, 2026

1

Today we will discuss:

- The Framework of a Winning Project
- How to Increase Your Odds of Success
- Where to Find Funding



Jefferson County Planning & Community Development

2

The Framework of a Winning Project: Grant Readiness



Alicia M. Dewey, Deputy Director
Jefferson County Planning & Community Development

3

What Is Grant Readiness?

Grant readiness includes:

- Planning
- Organization
- Capacity
- Follow Through



Grant readiness turns good ideas into fundable, actionable projects.

4

Why Is Grant Readiness Important?

The grant deadline should not be the starting line.

Strong applicants have already:

- Identified the need
- Developed the project
- Built support
- Gathered evidence
- Considered implementation

When the right opportunity opens, you should be matching a grant to a ready project—not scrambling to invent a project for the grant.

5

Start With the NEED, not the GRANT

1. Identify the Need: What problem are we trying to solve?

Problem = We need better access to the downtown and waterfront during periods of high demand or families lack access to affordable after-school programming.

↓

2. Develop the Project: What is the right solution?

Project = A defined solution based on documented need—not simply “build more parking or expand after-school program to 50 additional children.

↓

3. Find the Funding: What funding opportunity best fits the project?

Funding = Match the developed project to the appropriate program. \$75,000 planning grant for access study or \$40,000 grant for staffing, transportation & program supplies.

Need → Project → Funding NOT Funding → Invent a Project

Build the Project First. Match the Funding Second.

6

Project Scoping



The absolute most important piece of advice I can give you today is this:

Your project should be **R.E.A.L.**

**Rational
Endorsed
Attractive
Launch-Ready**

7

Rational



First, you need to determine what your community actually needs.

You can use a basic Project Planning Worksheet to guide this process.

- What is the problem that you are trying to solve? Who is affected? Why is it an issue?
- What is the solution? Frame your answer by describing your proposed project.
- Do you have data? Can you justify the need or is additional research required?
- What is in the way? What obstacles are preventing you from implementing a solution (capacity, financial resources, sustainability, lack of technical knowledge)?
- What information is missing? What details do you need in order to complete the plan? What questions need to be answered? Do you need expert input?

8

Rational



Never make the reviewer take your word for it.

- You can make sure the evidence exists before the application opens.
- Instead of “*Our community desperately needs affordable housing*” perhaps “*The 2026 Housing Needs Assessment identified X...*”

9

Rational



Also, before you start an application make sure that you have checked the following:

- Is your organization eligible?
- Can you make the deadline?
- Do you have the internal resources to meet the funding requirements?

You should also gather this important information and documents prior to preparing to apply:

- Organizational Information (Year established, EIN Number, Mission/Values Statement, Description of current services)
- Governance (organizational chart, list of Board members, Strategic Plan)
- Financial Documentation (AUD/Year-end Financial Statement, Audit, IRS Form 990, W-9, Annual Budget)
- Technical Requirements (UEI, SAM or Grants.gov registration)

10

Endorsed

Endorsed: You need to show that you are prepared.

Funders don't expect zero risk; they expect managed risk.

- Is there demonstrated community support?
- Have affected stakeholders been meaningfully engaged?
- Has opposition been identified and addressed?
- Are major regulatory, site-control, environmental, financial, or implementation risks understood?
- Can the applicant demonstrate a credible path forward?



11

Endorsed

Endorsed: You need to show that you have consensus.

Work to turn community opposition into actionable support.

Make sure to build consensus before you apply.

- Again, have you done any public surveys on the topic?
- Are there any press articles on the project?
- Have you hosted any community meetings/hearings/open houses?
- Have you requested letters of support? *More on this later!*



12

Attractive

Attractive: Think like a Reviewer!

Applicant mindset:

“We need money.”

“Our roof leaks.”

“Our budget is tight.”

Reviewer mindset:

“What public outcome does this produce?”

“Does it advance our priorities?”

“Can they deliver?”

*Your job is not to prove
you need money. Your
job is to prove that your
project deserves
investment.*



13

Attractive

Attractive: Think like a Reviewer!

How do we do this?

- Funders want to invest in outcomes—not expenses.
- Ask yourself, what will the rollout for this project look like?
- Adjust your scope where necessary.



14

Launch-Ready



Launch-Ready: Your project should be ready to go, well-thought-out, and backed by evidence. Ask “Are we ready?”.

Questions to ask yourself:

- Are we “shovel-ready”? Could we start tomorrow? Next month? Next year?
- Have we translated our rough ideas into formal plans, timelines, and cost estimates?
- Is this project aligned with our Comprehensive Plan?
- Have we collected any public feedback or surveys on the topic?
- Is there a specific study that highlights its importance?

15

Launch-Ready



Launch-Ready: Your project should be ready to go, well-thought-out, and backed by evidence. Ask “Can we actually deliver it?”.

Can we actually deliver it?

- Who will manage the project?
- Who will administer the grant?
- Have procurement requirements been considered?
- Are permits/site control/environmental reviews needed?
- Is the match secured or realistically obtainable?
- **Can we cash-flow reimbursable expenses?**
- Can we complete the project within the grant period?
- Who owns/maintains the asset after the grant ends?

16

Launch-Ready



Launch-Ready: Your project should be ready to go, well-thought-out, and backed by evidence. Ask, “Do we have evidence?”

There are three kinds of evidence: Data, Adopted Plans/Studies, Community Input. Evidence isn’t really just the “L” in REAL. It’s the thread running through all four.

Questions to ask yourself:

Have we collected any public feedback or surveys on the topic?

Are there other plans that could connect to this project?

- *Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan*
- *Jefferson County Hazard Mitigation Plan*
- *Coastal Lakeshore Economy and Resiliency (CLEAR) Initiative*
- *Jefferson County, NY Housing Needs Assessment*
- *Jefferson County, NY Farmland Protection Plan*

17

Let’s Put Our Efforts to Work: “Fund It” or “Trash It”



18

Let’s Put Our Efforts to Work

“Fund It” or “Trash It”....or “Not Yet”

- This is your opportunity to step into the shoes of a State Grant Reviewer
- I am going to present you with several project proposals.
- After each proposal, decide: Fund It, Not Yet, or Trash It.
- Remember: A GOOD project can be a BAD grant application if it is not ready yet.
- Then we will debrief our results for each project proposal.

19

FUND IT. TRASH IT. NOT YET.

Proposal #1

- Town of Liberty requests \$150,000 to replace the aging HVAC system and fix leaking gutters at the Highway Department garage.

“Not Yet.” As presented, this appears to be routine maintenance rather than a clearly defined grant investment with measurable public outcomes. But we need to know more.

20

FUND IT. TRASH IT. NOT YET.

Proposal #1

- Further investigation shows the HVAC failure is one component of a larger municipal facility problem: the building is energy inefficient, lacks backup power, cannot adequately support emergency operations, and has documented structural/energy deficiencies.

What would you need to know before deciding whether this could become a competitive project?

Energy audit, engineering assessment, cost estimate, alternative sites, useful life, capital plan, energy savings, local match, timeline

21

FUND IT. TRASH IT. NOT YET.

Proposal #2

- Downtown Revitalization Committee requests \$300,000 to transform an unused alleyway into a pedestrian-only artisan market. Project is listed in the 2024 Town Comprehensive Plan and has 15 local business letters of support. Preliminary design is complete. However, the Village does not own the alley and has not secured an easement from the property owner.

“Not Yet” because it is high visibility, directly tied to a plan, and there is documented community support, but the Village doesn’t have site control.

22

FUND IT. TRASH IT. NOT YET.

Proposal #3

- An organization finds a \$100,000 grant specifically designated for "Urban Agriculture & Community Gardens." They don't have a garden program, but they decide to invent one quickly just to get the funds.

“Trash It” because it is strategically flawed.

23

FUND IT. TRASH IT. NOT YET.

Proposal #3

- An organization finds a \$100,000 grant specifically designated for "Urban Agriculture & Community Gardens." They don't have a garden program, but they decide to invent one quickly just to get the funds.

How could the Project Needs Worksheet be used to align community needs before writing the grant?

Don't build a project around a funding source. Audit actual community priorities first, or partner with an existing local farm/food pantry to build a legitimate, deployable project with proven local buy-in.

24

FUND IT. TRASH IT. NOT YET.

Proposal #4

- A village plans to request \$500,000 for a massive splash pad in a local park. However, initial online survey results show heavy community opposition from residents concerned about water waste, local taxes, and noise.

“Not Yet” Community engagement uncovered legitimate concerns. That is actually useful planning information. The applicant should address water use, operating costs, noise, scale, location, etc. before applying.

25

FUND IT. TRASH IT. NOT YET.

Proposal #4

- A village plans to request \$500,000 for a massive splash pad in a local park. However, initial online survey results show heavy community opposition from residents concerned about water waste, local taxes, and noise.

How can the village turn this opposition into support and adjust the project scope?

Engage residents and affected stakeholders to understand the concerns behind the survey results. Determine whether concerns about water use, taxes, noise, scale, or location can be mitigated through design changes. Then, revise the project scope based on what the engagement and supporting data actually show.

26

FUND IT. TRASH IT. NOT YET.

Proposal #5

- A municipality has a beautifully designed \$2 million waterfront project with engineering complete, unanimous board support, strong public backing, permits underway, and a 20% local match committed. The grant program funds projects benefiting low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. The project area does not meet the program’s eligibility threshold.

“Trash It” because none of the other strengths matter if the project is not eligible for that particular funding source.

27

FUND IT. TRASH IT. NOT YET.

Let’s Reflect:

- Look around the room—notice how easy it was to spot the flaws when you were in the reviewer's chair?
- When you leave today and start scoping your projects using the Grant Readiness tools, keep this exact reviewer mindset in place.

28

Before You Chase the Grant...

Ask yourself, is our project R.E.A.L?

- **R** eal—Can I prove the problem exists?
- **E** ndorsed—Can I prove people support the solution?
- **A** ttractive—Can I explain why a funder should care?
- **L** aunch-Ready—Can I prove we are ready to deliver?

A grant does not make a project ready. A ready project makes a grant opportunity valuable.

29

How to Increase Your Odds



Aileen Anderson, Community Development Coordinator
Jefferson County Planning & Community Development

30

•Key Topics:

- **Leveraging Designation Programs:** Overview of Climate Smart Communities, Pro-Housing Communities, AARP Community Program, and other key frameworks.
- **Letters of Support:** Best practices for securing authentic local buy-in versus standard political support.

31



Climate Smart Communities (CSC) is an interagency New York State program that supports local efforts to meet the economic, social, and environmental challenges of climate change.

32

CSC Program Goals

- **Build resilience** to climate impacts.
- **Save** taxpayer dollars.
- **Increase** energy security and reliability.
- **Improve** public health and safety.
- **Support** a green innovation economy.
- **Demonstrate** leadership.
- **Reduce** greenhouse gas emissions.

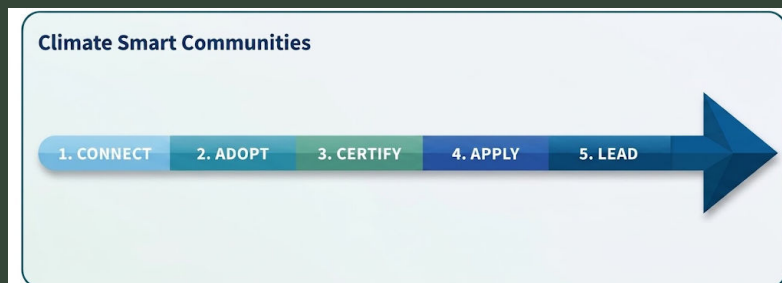
CSC Benefits

- **Receive free technical assistance**
- **Learn about best practices**
- **Network**
- **Reduce the cost of electric vehicles and charging stations**
- **Get grants**

33

34

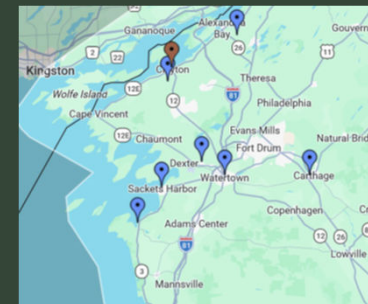
Steps to Participate



35

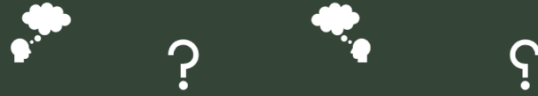
Jefferson County's Climate Smart Communities

- 8 communities have registered
- These include Alexandria (town), Brownville (village), Clayton (town and village), Henderson, Sackets Harbor, City of Watertown, and West Carthage.
- 1 community has achieved certification
- Village of Clayton (Bronze Certified)



36

How Does CSC Help With Grants?



Benefits of participating include better scores on grant applications for some competitive state funding programs, like the DEC CSC Grants, some NYSERDA grant programs, and some DOS grant programs.



37

How Does CSC Help With Grants?

- Actual scoring rubrics from 2026 CSC Grant RFA:

CSC Certification Status	Applicant is a certified silver Climate Smart Community.	8
	Applicant is a certified bronze Climate Smart Community.	6
	Applicant is a registered Climate Smart Community.	3
	Applicant is not a Climate Smart Community.	0

Certification Readiness	Applicant has provided documentation showing formation of a CSC task force and two meetings in the past year, per https://climatesmart.ny.gov/actions-certification/actions/#open/action/2	3
	Applicant has NOT provided documentation showing formation of a CSC task force and two meetings in the past year, per https://climatesmart.ny.gov/actions-certification/actions/#open/action/2	0

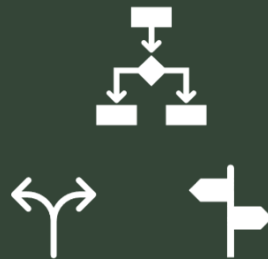
- Actual scoring rubrics from 2026 DOS Smart Growth RFA:

2. Demonstration of Smart Growth Commitment (maximum of 12 points)	
- Describes the actions taken by the municipality in the past decade to advance smart growth principles outlined above, including capital projects, policy changes, etc. Explains how the actions advance smart growth principles. (Up to 8 points) - Target community is recognized as a Certified Bronze Level (or above) Climate Smart Community as certified by NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. (0 or 2 points) - Target community is recognized as an age-friendly community within AARP's Network of Age-Friendly Communities. (0 or 2 points)	

38

Important Facts

- Any action taken after passage of the CSC pledge is initiated by the community itself.
- The program is flexible; it is designed to allow for variation in local priorities and values.



39

How Actions Help With Grants

Many CSC certification actions (124 actions to choose from) produce outcomes that can be used to develop, support, and guide other projects and grant applications:

- Actions include:
 - Inventories
 - Plans
 - Policy
 - Development
 - Training
 - Resilience

40

CONTACT INFORMATION

North Country Regional CSC Coordinator

Caroline Dodd



67 Main Street, Suite 201
Saranac Lake, NY 12983
cdodd@adirondack.org
(518) 891-6200

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation



625 Broadway, Albany, NY
12233-1030
w: (518)-402-8448
climatesmart@dec.ny.gov
<https://climatesmart.ny.gov/>



Homes and
Community Renewal

The Pro-Housing Community Program



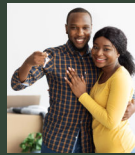
2026

41

42

New York State Homes and Community Renewal

New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR) is the State's affordable housing agency, with a mission to build, preserve, and protect affordable housing and increase homeownership throughout New York State.



What is the Pro-Housing Communities Program?

- The Pro-Housing Communities (PHC) Program certifies municipalities who are taking steps locally to address the housing shortage in New York State.
- Governor Hochul announced the Pro-Housing Communities Program in July 2023. In 2025, the Governor strengthened the program to require Pro-Housing Certification as a prerequisite for obtaining certain State discretionary grants.



Pro-Housing Community Program

43

44



Why should my community apply?

Joining the Pro-Housing Communities Program will boost local efforts to creatively address the housing shortage

- Share best practices and identify common barriers
- Ensure your community's data is represented in state housing strategies



45

What are the application requirements?

1. Letter of Intent

2. Submission of Key Data

- Zoning map and zoning code summary
- Building permit data from the previous five years



3. Either:

- Document that the municipality has permitted enough homes to increase their housing stock
 - Upstate - 0.33% in the previous year or 1% over the past three years
 - Downstate - 1% in the previous year or 3% over the past three years

OR

- Submit an executed Pro-Housing Community Resolution by the relevant governing body (town, village council, board, etc)

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. After completion of the submission, HCR will provide a determination within 90 days.

46



What are the requirements for maintaining certification?

1. If the municipality has had any zoning changes since the initial application submission:

- Map changes adopted – provide an updated zoning map in a GIS format (shapefile)
- Text amendments adopted – provide an updated zoning summary

2. For all municipalities

Permit data for increase or decrease of housing units

47

What grants can I apply for with PHC?

Administering Agency	Grant Program	Amount
Department of State	Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI)	\$100M
	NY Forward Program	\$100M
New York State HCR	NY Main Street Program	\$4.2M
Empire State Development	Regional Council Capital Fund	\$150M
	Market New York (capital grants only)	\$8M
	Long Island Investment Fund (LIIF)	\$143.5M
	Mid-Hudson Momentum Fund	\$150M
Department of Transportation	Public Transportation Modernization Enhancement Program (MEP)	\$68.9M

48

How many communities are certified in Jefferson County?



15 communities have submitted letters of intent



These include Adams (village), Alexandria (town and village), Brownville (village), Cape Vincent (town and village), Carthage, Clayton (town and village), Evans Mills, Henderson, Orleans, Sackets Harbor, City of Watertown, and West Carthage.

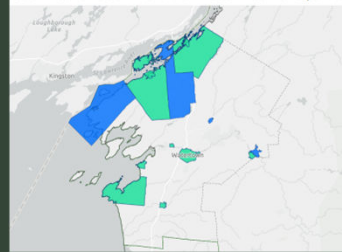


10 communities have achieved certification



These include Adams (village), Alexandria (town and village), Brownville (village), Clayton (town and village), Henderson, Sackets Harbor, City of Watertown, and West Carthage.

Submitted Letters of Intent and PHC-certified Municipalities



Pro-Housing Communities

Submitted Letters of Intent
Certified Communities

<https://hcr.ny.gov/phc>

49

Where can I get more information?

PROHOUSING@HCR.NY.GOV

[HTTPS://HCR.NY.GOV/PHC](https://hcr.ny.gov/phc)



OFFICE HOURS

If you are a local official or staffer working on the application or curious about the program, feel free to pop on to the HCR PHC weekly office hours.

Join the Tuesday WebEx call from 10-11am

Join the Wednesday WebEx call from 2-3pm

50



AARP Livable Communities: AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities



51

America's Population Is Rapidly Aging

- According to the U.S. Census Bureau, by 2034 the nation will have more people age 65 or older than under 18.
- By 2030, 1 out of every 5 people in the nation will be 65 or older.
- By 2060, nearly 1 in 4 people in the United States will be at least 65 years old.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA: "Demographic Turning Points for the United States: Population Projections for 2020 to 2060," *Current Population Reports*, P25-1144, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, D.C., 2020

52

AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities

The program serves as a catalyst to **educate** local leaders (both elected officials and engaged residents) and **encourage** them to implement the types of changes that make communities more livable for people of all ages, especially older adults.



53

Membership provides local leaders with:

- Connections 
- A private group forum 
- Support, guidance and best-practice resources 
- Expert-led webinars and technical assistance 
- Free! 

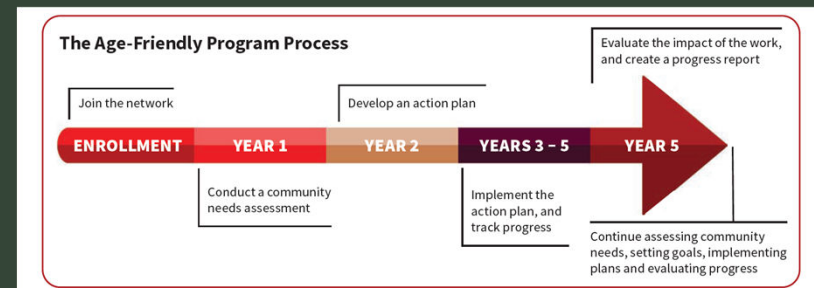
54

Enrolling in the Network

- Submit a membership application.  
- Provide a letter of commitment and a resolution in support of membership. 

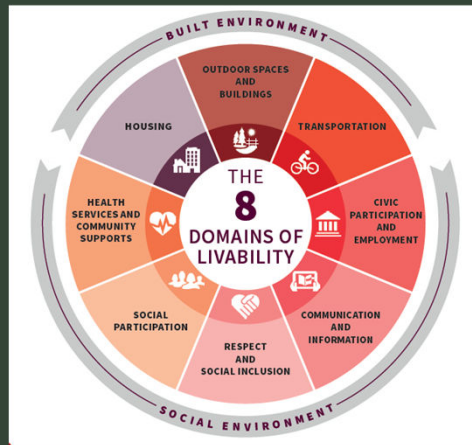
55

The Age-Friendly Program Process



56

8 Domains of Livability



57

How Does AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities Help With Grants?

- Actual scoring rubric from 2026 DOS Smart Growth RFA:

2. Demonstration of Smart Growth Commitment (maximum of 12 points)

- Describes the actions taken by the municipality in the past decade to advance smart growth principles outlined above, including capital projects, policy changes, etc. Explains how the actions advance smart growth principles. (Up to 8 points)
- Target community is recognized as a Certified Bronze Level (or above) Climate Smart Community as certified by NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. (0 or 2 points)
- Target community is recognized as an age-friendly community within AARP's Network of Age-Friendly Communities. (0 or 2 points)

58

How Else Does AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities Help With Grants?

The Program Process actions can be used to develop, support, and guide other projects and grant applications:

- Include older residents in processes
- Community Needs Assessment
- Action and Evaluation Plan

59

LEARN MORE, GET IN TOUCH

Website: AARP.org/AgeFriendly or AARP.org/Livable

Email: AARPAge-FriendlyNetwork@AARP.org

Facebook: [/AARPLivableCommunities](https://www.facebook.com/AARPLivableCommunities)

Twitter: [@AARPLivable](https://twitter.com/AARPLivable)

Free Newsletter: AARP.org/LivableSubscribe

Locate Your AARP State Office:

AARP.org/States or call 1-888-687-2277

OR SCAN THIS CODE



60



Letters of Support



Best practices for securing authentic local buy-in versus standard political support.

61

What Defines Authentic Buy-In?

Context & Engagement

- Specificity of Need
- Evidence of Engagement

Commitment & Scope

- Concrete Tangible Support
- Clear, Limited Scope

62

Core Building Blocks of the Letter

- Credibility & Context - State the signer's title and organization, followed by a 1–3 sentence local context on demand, waitlists, gaps, or systemic barriers.
- Alignment & History - Explicitly map grant goals (e.g., public health, youth jobs) to local activities while proving prior partnership or collaboration.
- Actionable Commitments - Detail exact commitments—like direct referral pathways, hosting space, or steering hours—with measurable, time-bound metrics.

63

Letter Structure

1. Opening (purpose + authority)
2. Local context (why it matters here)
3. Connection to the applicant/project (how they know it)
4. *Specific support (what they'll do; time/extent if possible)*
5. Confidence + closing (availability for follow-up, if appropriate)

Keep it to one page unless the funder asks otherwise.

64

Where to Find Funding



\$



Andy R. Nevin, Senior Planner
Jefferson County Planning & Community Development

69

Federal, State, Regional and Local Sources



70

Grants.gov

Primary source for most Federal Grants

- ✓ Centralizing more than 1,000 different grant programs across federal grant-making agencies awarding more than \$500 billion annually.
- ✓ Standardizing grant information, application packages and processes for finding and applying for federal grants.
- ✓ Registering once to apply to as many federal agencies and grant programs as needed with just one secure login.
- ✓ Tips how to apply, track, and get support.

Federal and State Sources

71

NYS Consolidated Funding Application (CFA)

Primary source for most many State Grants:

- <https://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/cfa>

CFA Portal for Registration and Login:

- <https://apps.cio.ny.gov/apps/cfa/>

Portal Includes Links:

- ✓ CFA Available Resources,
- ✓ CFA Application Manual,
- ✓ Regional Council Guidebook,
- ✓ Recorded Webinars, Q & A

Federal and State Sources

72

CFA Applications should align with the North Country Regional Plan

North Country 2023 Strategic Plan

Link: <https://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2024-11/12.1.23%20Strategic%20Plan%20North%20Country%20REDC%20Confidential.pdf>

NYS Regional Development Council:

Link: <https://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/>

- Initiative programs
- Workforce programs
- Broadband programs

CFA Projects – Review previously funded

Link: https://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/cfa/projects?utm_medium=301&utm_source=www.nyscfaprojectdata.ny.gov

73

New York State Grant Management:

Register for Notices of Funding and search for grants

link: <https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/>

- ✓ To be informed when new or renewed grant opportunities are offered.
- ✓ Sign up for webinars, view instructional videos, access forms and sample documents
- ✓ Track deadlines that can shift based on NYS budget timing.

74

NYS Dept. of State RESILIENCY:

Coastal Lakeshore Economy and Resiliency (CLEAR) Implementation Design Grants

Support local communities dealing with persistent high-water levels along Lake Ontario... the upper St. Lawrence River with the development of comprehensive resiliency strategies and plans to institute critical long-term protective measures and strengthen existing investments.

link: <https://dos.ny.gov/coastal-lakeshore-economy-and-resiliency-clear-initiative>

Countywide Resilience Implementation Strategy Program (CRISP)

Began in 2017 to assist communities in developing countywide plans that address climate change risks and vulnerabilities and identify strategies for planning and implementing projects in an environmentally and economically sustainable way.

link: <https://dos.ny.gov/countywide-resilience-planning-program>

75

USDA – Rural Development

Over 50 Financial Assistance - Programs in New York:

Bio Preferred, Business, Communities Facilities, Electric, Energy, Multifamily Housing, Single Family Housing, Telecommunication, Water & Environmental.

- <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services>

NYS Septic Replacement Program

(Jefferson County Administered)

- www.jeffersoncountyny.gov/departments/planning/septic-grants

NYS Dept of Ag & Markets

Farmland Protection Program

- <https://agriculture.ny.gov/land-and-water/farmland-protection>

\$6.365 million available within each of nine regions across the State

76

Non-Profit Specific Funding

NYS Office of Faith and Non-Profit Development Services

Mission: provide essential information, facilitate access to state grants, and enhance organizational capacities

Key initiatives:

- Capacity Building
- Coalition Building
- Grants and Funding
- Housing Initiatives
- Community Outreach and Guide Development

Grant Information: <https://dos.ny.gov/office-faith-and-nonprofit-development-services>

Other Non-Profit Grant Resources:

- Grants.gov
- Candid.org
- thegrantportal.com/grants-for-nonprofits
- National Council of Nonprofits Grant Research Tool

77

Regional and Local Sources

Regional and Local Grants:

Thousand Islands International Tourism Council

Visitors Investment Fund intent:

- ✓ Increase the quality and diversity of tourism offerings
- ✓ Encourage visitors to stay longer and spend more
- ✓ Support tourism throughout Jefferson County

Link: <https://visit1000islands.com/visitors-investment-fund/>

✓ **Eligibility**

- Private, for-profit operators
- Non-for-profit operators
- Municipalities limited to incorporated towns and villages within Jefferson County as well as the City of Watertown

78

Regional and Local Sources

Regional and Local Grants:

AARP – Community Challenge

(Grant Program – Part of its Livable Communities Initiative)

In 2026, AARP accepted applications for three grant opportunities:

- 1) **Flagship Grants** – local improvement projects related to public places, housing, transportation, digital connections and disaster resilience.
- 2) **Demonstration Grants** – Pedestrian Safety, High Speed Internet, and Housing Design Competitions.
- 3) **Capacity Building Microgrants** – Walk Audits, Bike Audits, HomeFit Modifications, and Disaster Preparedness.

Link: <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/community-challenge/>

Eligible Organizations:

- ✓ 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), and 501(c)(6) nonprofit organizations (Recognized by the IRS)
- ✓ Government entities,
- ✓ Other organizations considered on a case-by-case basis

Note: AARP cannot provide funds to for-profit companies or individuals.

79

Regional and Local Sources

Regional and Local Grants:

Northern NY Community Foundation – Link: nnycf.org

- ✓ Eligible applicants: registered 501 (c) (3) in the tri-county area (J, L, SL.)
- ✓ Municipalities and school districts may be eligible for projects that enhance community quality of life and fall outside typical public funding responsibilities
- ✓ Agencies seeking funding through a fiscal sponsor must confirm a partnership with an eligible nonprofit organization before the grant proposal is submitted
- ✓ Use their Grant Portal to search for quarterly grant Opportunities, while others open periodically

80

Regional and Local Grants:

Rotary International

"Rotary members contribute their skills, expertise, and resources to help solve some of the world's toughest problems. From providing clean water to promoting peace worldwide, **Rotary Foundation** grants bring service project ideas to life."

Link: <https://www.rotary.org/en/get-involved/our-programs/grants>

Humanitarian Projects; Scholarships; and International Exchanges

- ✓ District grants fund small scale, short-term activities
(local community needs and those abroad)
- ✓ Global grants support large international activities, aligned with Rotary's seven areas of focus. (Can be local if partnered with an international club)
- ✓ Disaster response grants support relief and recovery efforts in areas affected by natural disaster.

Local Grants: must be applied directly to a distinct project that yields measurable local benefit.

81



82

Questions?



Jefferson County Planning & Community Development

83