



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 24, 2022

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Agency of Transportation Awards More Than \$3.1 Million in Bicycle and Pedestrian Grants

Barre, Vt— The Vermont Agency of Transportation (AOT) today announced that it will award \$3,130,800 in grants to municipalities for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvement projects. The combination of construction projects and planning grants will benefit cities and towns statewide by improving connectivity and safety for travelers while also providing tangible economic benefits.

As in past years, there is ongoing interest throughout Vermont in making communities and streets more usable for all modes of transportation. In downtowns and village centers especially, municipalities are responding to public interest in better conditions for walking and bicycling.

“Walking and bicycling, especially for the many short trips that are made, are a great way to reduce congestion and provide an opportunity for physical activity for Vermonters and visitors.” said AOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator Jon Kaplan. “There are great positive effects on property values, tourism, and business growth, in addition to reductions in traffic congestion, improvements in public health, and a reduction in personal transportation costs.”

The Agency annually awards millions of federal dollars through the Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, with a goal of providing safe and convenient facilities for people who want and need alternative transportation opportunities.

This year’s awards include a continuation of the initiative to fund small-scale improvements using 100% state funds. These smaller projects address critical safety needs, such as pedestrian crossings and filling critical sidewalk gaps. The Agency plans to assist municipalities construct these small projects quickly with a minimum of delays. Small-scale projects were awarded in eight communities statewide.

AOT has seen substantial interest in the program and received applications for proposed projects totaling \$10.9 million. This year’s awards will fund various construction projects, including sidewalk replacement along Main Street in Franklin, new sidewalks and crossings in Pawlet to provide safe access in the village area, pedestrian safety improvements along Pleasant Street in Bethel, and bike lanes along Route 9 in Brattleboro.

To learn more about the program and see a complete list of this year's grant recipients visit: <http://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/local-projects/bike-ped>

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