

A hand holding a white megaphone with a blue handle, pointing towards the right. It is positioned on the left side of the slide, partially overlapping the main title.

# **Federal Funding Assistance Program**

**Knowledge Bites  
January 24, 2023**

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- The background of the slide is a dense, overlapping collage of various US dollar bills. Visible denominations include \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100. The bills are scattered across the entire frame, creating a textured, financial-themed backdrop. A semi-transparent blue rectangle is centered over the middle of the image, containing a list of topics.
- VLCT
  - ARPA Refresher
  - Standard Allowance
  - Federal Funding Assistance Program
  - Questions?





- Founded in 1967, VLCT is a member-owned, non-profit, non-partisan organization
- All 247 Vermont cities and towns are Members
- Another 142 “units of municipal government” = Associate Members (villages, counties, etc.)
- Membership provides top ROI by saving your municipality time and money.
- Think of the League as an extension of your office, providing comprehensive and specialized expertise and support.
- Want to know more? Check out our Member Guide ([HERE](#)).

### SUPPORT

Whatever your issue, you can call one number for all your questions. Get answers and resources quickly from knowledgeable professionals, many of whom have firsthand knowledge from serving their municipalities.

### KNOWLEDGE

Access specialized expertise, on-point training, vetted resources, and the latest data – all with a municipal focus and deep understanding of trends and issues across the state.

### REPRESENTATION

Municipal voices are heard collectively and as a single, united voice through full-time, focused advocacy.

### INSURANCE

Manage your risks and protect your taxpayers' assets with robust member-owned insurance programs with coverage and services that are tailored to municipalities.

### CONNECTION

Whether you need to talk shop or shop for vendors, VLCT connects you to a variety of networks, agencies, organizations, colleagues, and experts.



# Local ARPA - Vermont's Share

- Allocated to states based on population using 2019 Census data
- “Metro cities” (based on HUD definitions)
  - Burlington (pop. 42,819) & South Burlington\*\* (pop. 19,509)
  - Received funding directly from Treasury
  - Largest awards in VT = \$27,176,144.49 and \$5,654,533, respectively
  - More rigid, quarterly reporting requirements
- “NEUs” (non-entitlement units, based on HUD definitions)
  - Everyone else
  - Received funding from Treasury distributed through the SOV
  - Largest award = Colchester (pop. 17,127), \$5,120,335
  - Smallest award = Victory (pop. 63), \$18,956
  - Simpler, annual reporting requirements
- Local ARPA works out to be ~\$300/Vermonters
- **VLCT creates the ARPA Assistance & Coordination Program to assist Vermont municipalities in accepting, spending and complying with these federal funds.**

<b>Local ARPA Funds:</b>	
Metro Cities	\$20,721,902
Non-Entitlement Units of Government (NEUs)	\$58,788,245
Counties*	\$121,202,550
<b>TOTAL Local ARPA Funds:</b>	<b>\$200,712,697</b>
<b>State of Vermont**</b>	<b>\$1,049,287,303</b>
<b>TOTAL VERMONT ARPA:</b>	<b>\$1,250,000,000</b>

How much money did your community get?

Click [HERE](#)

\*County money has been reallocated to municipalities.  
\*\*South Burlington has since been recategorized since they are not an entitlement community.





- Signed into law on March 11, 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act created the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund – referred to simply as “ARPA”
- Unlike any other federal grant program
- Not competitive; no application process; one-size-fits-all “grant agreement”
- No public process requirement
- Cash up front in two tranches, one year apart (summer 2021, summer 2022)
- Protracted timeline to plan & spend (12/31/2026)
- How many eligible Vermont municipalities accepted these federal funds?  
ALL except one.
- The best part....the “Standard Allowance”



## Local ARPA – A Rare & Beautiful Thing



 **277 TOWNS**  
WERE CERTIFIED TO ACCEPT ARPA FUNDS

 **65 TOWNS**  
WILL RECEIVE MORE THAN \$750,000 EACH

 **97 MUNICIPALITIES (35%)**  
RECEIVED MORE THAN \$500,000

 **186 MUNICIPALITIES (67%)**  
RECEIVED MORE THAN \$250,000

 **249 MUNICIPALITIES (90%)**  
RECEIVED MORE THAN \$100,000

# The “Standard Allowance”

- The “[final rule](#)” was issued January 6, 2022.
- Included a provision called the “[standard allowance](#).”
- Allowed up to **\$10M** to be treated as “lost revenue” (no need to demonstrate, calculate or document).
- What can these funds be spent on? The “[provision of government services](#).”
- What does that mean? Anything a government typically spends money on.
- How many municipalities in Vermont have local ARPA awards <\$10M? ALL of them except one (Burlington).
- Are these funds considered revenue sharing by Treasury? Yes (Final Rule, Section IV.G.).
- This means local ARPA awards can now be used as required grant match (“local share”) for other grants, even federal ones\*!

\*Excluding the state’s Medicaid and CHIP programs.





# Let's Say That Again With Feeling.....

*ARPA can be  
used as grant match  
for other state and  
federal grant  
programs*



# Billions of Dollars for Vermont

(no, “billions” is not a typo)

- **American Rescue Plan Act:** \$1.25B for Vermont. \$200M in flexible direct funds to municipalities and +\$1B that state agencies are now working to distribute.
- **The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL):** The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) – More than \$2B for Vermont through hundreds of new federal programs.
- **Inflation Reduction Act:** \$500B nationally that includes significant climate investments impacting municipalities

*“In this watershed moment of federal funding opportunities, **now is the time to turn your ideas into actions but you need help.** Whether it is taking the very first step or removing a stumbling block along the way, we can provide added capacity ...”*





# Months of prep. Its finally here.

- Officially launched December 15, 2022 ([HERE](#))
- Modeled after our successful ARPA Assistance and Coordination Program
- Includes ARPA + Bipartisan Infrastructure Law + Inflation Reduction Act + More!
- Two dedicated VLCT staff to broaden and deepen assistance
- Available to all Vermont's towns, cities, and villages, regardless of their size or capacity level
- Funded by a 2-year grant from the State of Vermont through the Agency of Commerce and Community Development



# Expert advice is only a click, call or email away

- [VLCT's Vermont Federal Funding Guidebook](#)
- Modeled from the White House's [BIL Guidebook](#) and [IRA Guidebook](#)
- ~500 programs across BIL and IRA
- VLCT culled them all to present only ones that are:
  - Open to VT municipalities as *eligible* applicants
  - *Applicable* based on the scale and scope of projects undertaken in Vermont
- Dynamic document that will be revised as program information updates and changes.



## The Vermont Federal Funding Guidebook

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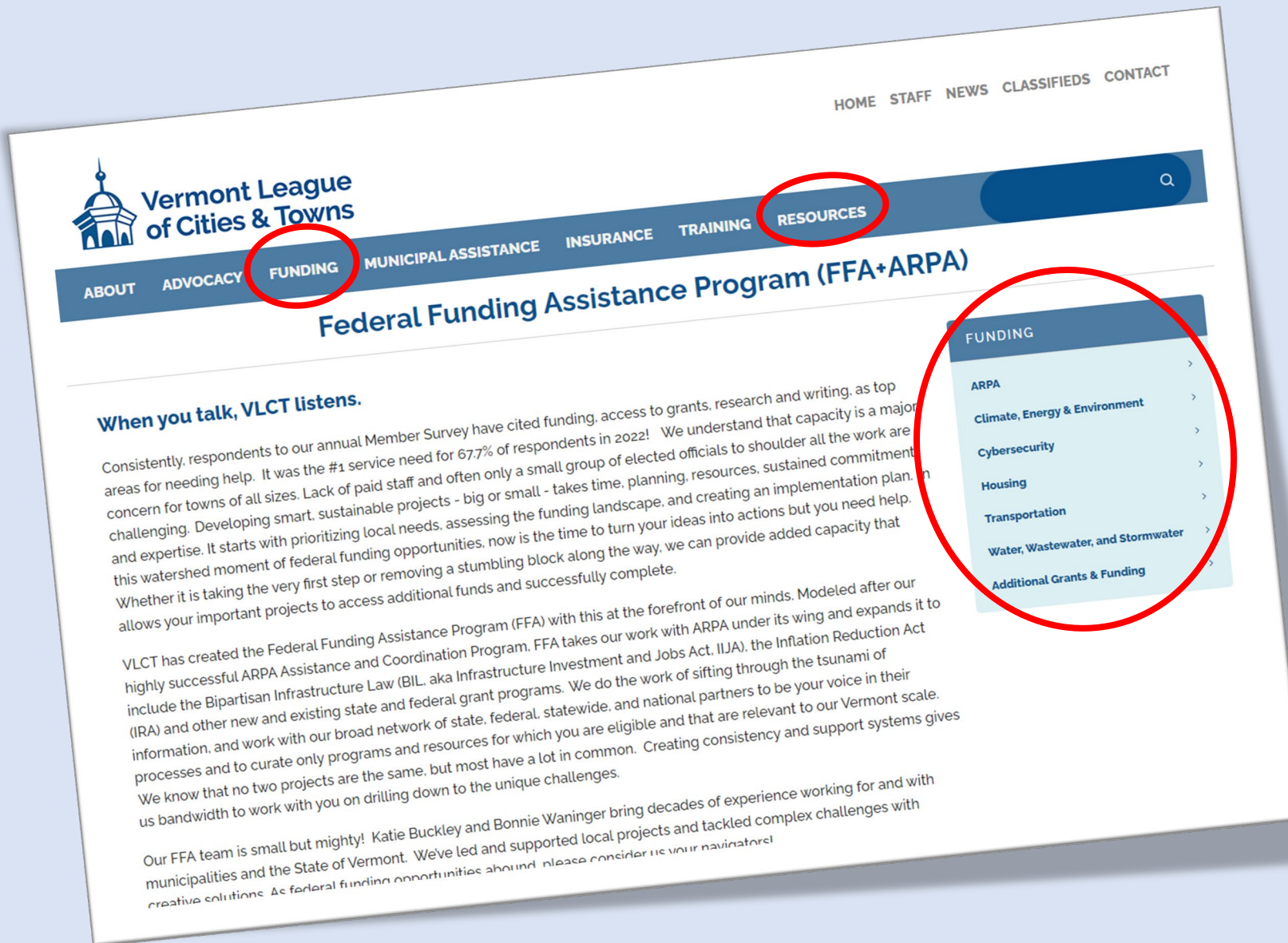
A GUIDEBOOK TO THE BIPARTISAN  
INFRASTRUCTURE LAW, INFLATION  
REDUCTION ACT, AND MORE

(Adapted from the Building A Better America Guidebook)





# Expert advice is only a click, call or email away



## Dedicated program web content and resources:

- FFA main page and topic specific pages:
  - [ARPA](#)
  - [Climate, Energy & Environment](#)
  - [Cybersecurity](#)
  - [Housing](#)
  - [Transportation](#)
  - [Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater](#)
- Send your inquiries to our dedicated email address: [FFA@vlct.org](mailto:FFA@vlct.org)



# Expert advice is only a click, call or email away

## Need one-on-one help?

Grab 15 minutes with us for a "Consults on Call" appointment! Whether your project is just in the idea phase, has started to gain momentum, has stalled completely or you just need help prioritizing projects before you get started, let us help you.

Our "Consults on Call" hours are Wednesdays, 1:00-2:00 pm and 7:00-8:00 pm. Simply click the blue "Book An Appointment" button, select the date and time that works best for you and complete the details. If you think you need more than 15 minutes, please email [FFA@vlct.org](mailto:FFA@vlct.org) to schedule a longer time slot.

**BOOK AN APPOINTMENT**

## "Consults on Call"

- Self-book 15 minutes of one-on-one time with the FFA team
- Talk about a local project, initiative or problem; brainstorm ideas, solutions, pathways forward; discuss available funding options
- **Members only.** Must have an official role with a VLCT member organization (selectboard, city council, trustee, Town Manager or Administrator, town clerk, treasurer, planning commissioner, etc.).
- To schedule an appoint visit:






# Tip of the Week

Sometimes a simple, small piece of information can make all the difference in saving valuable time, frustration, and even money. One tip, trick or piece of advice can result in a more competitive grant application, a more successful compliance audit, a project budget staying on track or on budget, etc. Knowing the rules and how to play the game is critical to success in the arena of public funding.



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ABOUT ADVOCACY FUNDING MUNICIPAL ASSISTANCE INSURANCE TRAINING RESOURCES

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## FFA Tip of the Week

**JANUARY 20, 2023 - Grant Writing:** A good grant writer not only knows when to apply for a grant opportunity but also when *not* to apply. How? They invest time in researching a grant before starting an application. They closely read the funding program's guidance documents and application materials first, followed by several reads of the application itself. They attend application workshops that might be offered by the funder. They study the requirements for the funding, if awarded, to better understand what the grant administration will entail. They research information like past awards to help build an understanding of what makes a successful, competitive, and fundable application. Often they may reach out to the program staff of the funder to introduce the project to determine if the grant opportunity is a good fit and the project would be competitive; staff can be very helpful in offering advice on how to strengthen a prospective application. The hours spent researching for a grant application may be many more than the hours spent actually writing it. After all that work, a grant writer might determine that an application in that particular round isn't a good idea - could be the timing isn't right, could be the project isn't quite ready, could be that the fit is wrong, could be that the funding is just too difficult to use for the amount funds being sought. However, if the go/no-go decision results in a 'go,' then think of grant writing as marketing your project, and the funder as your investor. If you want the funder to give you their money, then you have to demonstrate the value and return on their investment.

**JANUARY 13, 2023 - Resource:** The Vermont Agency of Transportation (AOT or "VTrans") maintains an online resource for publishing its important and useful data called **VTransparency**. It allows the public to have access to and use the Agency's data to help make informed decision at all levels, including on the most local level. If your community has a project that involves working in the State highway right-of-way, you can search the **'Current VTrans Projects'** page (<https://vtransparency.vermont.gov/pages/projects2>) for VTrans' current projects and what's planned for the next two (2) years in your municipality (and across Vermont!). Working with VTrans to align the timing of your project with theirs might result in efficiencies that could reduce construction costs and at the very least a headache or two for you and your residents. Planning ahead just got a little easier thanks to VTrans valuable tool!

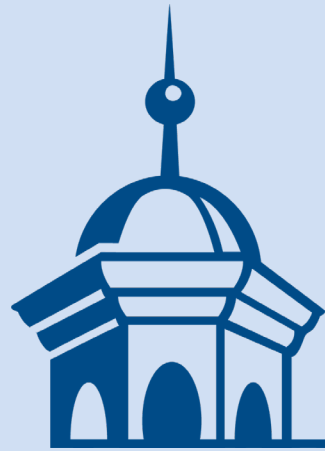
**JANUARY 6, 2023 - Grant Writing & Budgeting:** A common grant writing error is disconnection between the project budget and application narratives. For instance, the narrative might discuss having a substantial public engagement process however the budget does not include a line item or clear description of these activities in it anywhere. To prevent disconnections, create a list of the project components first and then line them up against your project budget - do they match up? If not, then you can do two things. You could provide more clarity in the areas of the budget where the resources exist to fund these activities - include **"Public Engagement"** as a line item in your project budget. Or, to help the application reviewer, you could include parenthetical reference notes in your narrative about which section of your budget funds these activities, Ex. *(Community engagement, \$4,000, included in line item XX of the project budget)*. This helps avoid the allurements of adding major (unbudgeted) components solely to win review points and demonstrates your attention to details. Don't forget to cross the "Ts" and dot the "Is" - go back and verify the budget ties out after finalizing your narratives.

**DECEMBER 30, 2022 - Wage Requirements:** Two types of wage requirements may affect construction projects that receive State and/or Federal funds. The Vermont State Prevailing Wage may apply to projects authorized or funded in whole or part by the State of Vermont Capital Construction Act. Public construction projects using Federal funds may be required to conform to the Davis-Bacon Act. Vermont's State Prevailing Wages are available under the Publications section at [www.vtlni.info](http://www.vtlni.info). Federal Davis-Bacon wage requirements are available via Sam.gov. When both apply, Davis-Bacon takes precedence. Need more help in determining Davis-Bacon wages? Then check out VLCT's new **"Guide to Obtaining Federal Davis-Bacon Wage Determinations"** to walk through the sam.gov access process [HERE](#).

# Questions?







**Vermont League  
of Cities & Towns**

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**Thank You!**

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