

**NEW HAMPSHIRE  
MUNICIPAL  
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE  
GRANT (MTAG)  
PROGRAM  
2020**

**New Hampshire Municipal Technical Assistance Grant Program**  
**Program Information and Application Instructions for 2020**

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## 2020 PROGRAM INFORMATION

### Introduction

The New Hampshire Municipal Technical Assistance Grant Program (MTAG), provides competitive grants for New Hampshire's incorporated cities and towns who want to expand options for places to live (e.g. by location, design, and/or price-point)) and need to change their zoning regulations in order to do so.

For example, a community may want places to live in the town center, but current zoning does not allow it. Or, people may be looking for denser neighborhoods of smaller homes, but current zoning does not allow it.

***Grants range from a minimum of \$5000.00 to a maximum of \$20,000.00***

***A cash match of 25% is required.***

***Community outreach and engagement is required – we will provide assistance for that.***

Funds are for hiring a consultant to

- assist in identifying the community's housing needs
- review current zoning and related regulations related to housing
- re-write or create new regulations to permit a wider range of choices in home location, design, and/or price-point that support what the community has identified it needs.

### Background to the Municipal Technical Assistance Grant Program

New Hampshire is second on the country with a percentage of over-60 adults. By 2034, only 14 years from now, projections suggest there will be more people over age 60 than under age 18. (US Census, *An Aging Nation* )

Today, most communities have been seeing fewer young families for some time, which shows up in declining school populations.

Millennials (those born in the 1980's and 1990's) are faced with lower- paying jobs and college debt, making it difficult to find affordable places to live – whether to rent or to own. This has been underscored by the challenges New Hampshire employers are facing: lots of jobs, but no where for workers to live.

National trends indicate that Millennials want smaller homes, preferably where they can walk to work, services and social connections. Many Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) are looking for the same thing. However, decent places to live that are smaller, energy efficient and either walkable or close to public transportation are rarely affordable, if they are available at all.

Smaller, decent and affordable is only part of the picture for those with mobility and/or sensory challenges. Home design for those who cannot walk or have difficulty seeing, for example, is usually a modification made in response to the situation, rather than planned for as an eventuality.

Multi-family homes, co-living, cottages and even tiny houses are some of the desired solutions to the challenge of allowing housing diversity. However, many Granite State communities' zoning or other regulations do not permit homes other than detached single-family (and now, by State statute, accessory dwelling units). Mixed-use buildings that have apartments above retail shops, or homes shared among unrelated friends, or new multiple-family homes in denser neighborhoods are often prohibited by regulations.

Facilitating the creation (or adaptation) of a wider range of types of homes may support a larger vision or plan the community has (e.g. economic development, downtown revitalization, job creation, more). It would certainly be a step in creating fairness for all community members.

Changing regulations is challenging. Technical knowledge is necessary, and there must be both public will AND political will to make it happen.

Knowing what needs to change- and what the goals are- is a first step. The MTAG Program's purpose is to provide funds for assistance to those communities that want their ordinances and regulations, as they affect housing, to support the changing and diverse needs of their citizens.

**NOTE: THE MTAG PROGRAM IS NOT FEDERALLY FUNDED  
AND THEREFORE HAS NO FEDERAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

### **MTAG Program Administration**

This program is currently funded by New Hampshire Housing. Plan NH administers the program with guidance from an advisory Steering Committee that consists of representatives of the Plan NH Board, the New Hampshire Municipal Association, New Hampshire Office of Strategic Initiatives, UNH Cooperative Extension, representatives from private firms and others with a knowledge of and interest in creating strong and healthy communities in the Granite State.

This Committee reviews municipal grant applications, evaluates them, and makes recommendations to Plan NH as to who should receive the grants. Recommendations are by consensus, and Plan NH reserves final authority over all work products and decisions to be developed or made within and for the MTAG Program.

The Committee also advises Plan NH regarding how this program is shaped and conducted.

Representatives from New Hampshire Housing and other funders, as applicable, serve in an advisory capacity.

## 2019 - 2020 GRANT APPLICATION INFORMATION and CRITERIA

*Applications are now being accepted on a rolling basis – in other words, no deadline (until current funding is depleted)*

*NOTE: we acknowledge that some smaller communities may not have the resources to complete a full application. If your community is one of these, please give us a call. We are developing an alternative approach. We want to work with you.*

### Eligible Applicants

Applicant eligibility is strictly limited to incorporated New Hampshire cities and towns (“municipalities”).

### Grant Awards

Grants are *on a competitive basis* to communities who demonstrate a need **and readiness** for their project. Grants will be no less than \$5,000.00 and no more than \$20,000.00.

**Grant money will be dispersed as reimbursements.** Program communities will submit copies of program invoices, which have been paid, and Plan NH will reimburse from MTAG funds up to the amount requested.

- Invoices are to be submitted to Plan NH at least quarterly, if not more often.
- Invoices must indicate which tasks/items are relate to Community Outreach and Engagement activities, and which to Technical Assistance.

Plan NH will withhold the final 25% of grant funds until final language is presented that will be voted on. A reasonable effort to propose adoption by the appropriate municipal body is required.

- Each participating community will have its own timeline of activity and thus deadline for final distribution of funds.

***Note that Match Funds (see below) must be drawn down first before MTAG funds are expended.***

### Required Municipal Cash Match

Applicants must demonstrate a **cash** match commitment of 25% of requested MTAG Program grant funds. For example, if an applicant requests an MTAG Program grant of \$10,000 for a project, it must demonstrate a local cash match commitment of \$2,500.

For the purposes of this program, we define “cash match” as a financial contribution toward the total project costs made by the applicant. This may consist of

- direct municipal appropriations contributed by the municipality specifically for the approved scope of work,
- financial gifts, private financial contributions, or grant funds from other legal sources provided directly to the municipality.

Proof of match (or pledge for funds or, when applicable, plan to procure Match funds) must be documented and submitted with the application. It should specify sources of match.

**Applications may be submitted to Plan NH at any time.  
Plan NH and its Advisory Board will review the application within 30 days  
and conduct an interview with the Applicant Team at a mutually-acceptable time.**

**A decision will be made within five business days thereafter.**

**If it is positive, an Agreement will be sent, and the community will then have  
30 days  
to review, sign and return the Agreement to Plan NH.**

**Alternatively: if no written application is being prepared, Plan NH will work with the community to  
identify project needs and goals, develop a timeline, and more. Please call us to discuss.**

#### **PURPOSE and USE of GRANT FUNDS**

The MTAG Program is a voluntary program that provides competitive grants to municipalities to ***increase options for places to live (by location and/or design of homes) in their communities.*** The reasons for increasing these choices may vary, but come down to changing and/or diverse needs due to economic or other situations.

In turn, these increased options should support a larger vision or plan which the municipality may have (e.g., economic development) and/or a demonstrated need within the community (e.g. around demographics, income, other).

MTAG Program provides funds to hire qualified consultants, which may include your regional planning commission, to conduct the proposed project work. Documentation of the qualifications of the individual(s) with whom your municipality will be working *must be included in the application.*

A consultant's costs may include time, direct costs associated with the project, and indirect costs reasonably attributable to the project.

#### **Community Engagement**

Plan NH has retained the services of UNH Cooperative Extension, who will assist grantees in developing a final outreach and engagement plan (based on what is outlined in the application). Individual

assistance by UNH Cooperative Extension will also be available for each grantee throughout the program.

**At least** 5% of the MTAG funds **must** support community outreach and community engagement in the work that contributes to the development of the new (or re-written) ordinances. Community engagement will ensure that the citizenry is fully informed of and contributes to any proposed ordinance.

- Grantees are encouraged to hold a public forum at the outset of the work, outlining the purpose of the program, its goals, and the steps they envision will be needed to achieve them. This will be the first of what should be several opportunities for citizens to not just contribute but collaborate in identifying the needs and what changes could address them.
- Throughout the program, grantees will conduct an ongoing outreach and education process to gather input from a broad range of community members, including those who may be most affected by a new ordinance but who may feel they have no voice - as well as those who are traditionally opposed to changes.
- Grantees should have one final public *discussion* (not just a hearing) about the final draft of an ordinance before it is submitted to the regulatory process.

Funds may be used for surveys – both online and in person. However, sessions or other group discussions where there can be real dialog around this issue are **required**.

## Project end

**The final 25% of MTAG funds will not be dispersed until there is concrete evidence that your intended ordinances, whether new or revised (according to your project and work plan) have been drafted and submitted to the appropriate governing body for final approval or vote.**

## Work is done when ...

1. Project elements are completed and
2. Where new ordinances or regulations are being proposed, a reasonable effort has been made to secure adoption by the appropriate municipal body.

## Grant funds may NOT be used ...

- For the acquisition of property.
- To pay for municipal staff or equipment.
- To pay for food, unless food is available to all attendees at a publicly noticed meeting (e.g., a listening session). **MTAG or Match Funds for food may NOT exceed 2.5% of the total project budget.**

## GRANTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

As a condition of selection as an MTAG Program grantee, municipalities will be required to report **on a monthly basis (due the last business day of each month)** on progress toward implementing their proposed scope of work, including

- **Completed tasks and outcomes, accomplishments and**
- metrics of success, including documentation on public meetings, workshops and hearings, public participation levels, and additional outreach efforts.

Invoices may be included with the reports. Invoices must be submitted at least quarterly.

This report should include not only a summary of what has happened/status of achieving a particular goal, but *might* also include

- What questions are coming up or which have come up that are (still) unanswered?
- Are there areas in which you feel stuck, or that progress is not being made?
- Have you had to change or re-design your strategy or action plan at all? If so, why?
- Has anything come up that has surprised you?

Some grantees, depending on their project, may be asked to report on the experience and lessons learned at a future meeting or conference where such information may be of interest and/or use.

## POST GRANT REQUIREMENTS

After the close of the grant period, Municipal grantees will be required to submit annual (by December 31) progress reports to Plan NH, reporting on implementation and outcomes, for a period of 5 years after the conclusion of the award period. For example, an MTAG grantee that adopts a co-living ordinance will be required to submit data on the number of times it is used in a 5-year period by development applicants after adoption. (Additional information may be requested.)



## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All components of your application **must be compiled into one PDF file** and sent, via email or Dropbox, to Plan NH ([info@plannh.org](mailto:info@plannh.org)). These may be sent at any time.

If your community is small and without the resource to submit this information in a formal application, please call Plan NH to work on an alternative method of application.

1. **Cover: ON ONE PAGE**, please include (in this order):
  - a. The name of your municipality and address of town hall or governing body
  - b. Project contact person's name, affiliation with community, phone, e-mail.
  - c. What is the population of your community (year round/seasonal)?
  - d. What is the median income of your year-round community?
  - e. How old is your Master Plan?
  - f. What section(s) of your current Master Plan would this project support?
  - g. Amount of NH MTAG funding requested.
  - h. Amount of pledged (or actual) cash match (please also ID source of this funding and include documentation).
  - i. Total project budget.
  - j. Signature of Chief Executive Officer of municipality who holds fiduciary responsibility – or other representative designated by the governing body – with a note certifying that the information contained in the application is true and complete to the best of the belief of the signatory.
2. Starting on the next page, please tell us (**no more than 3 pages**) about the project that the MTAG Program would fund:
  1. What is the housing challenge that your community is facing? How is this showing up/being demonstrated (eg, have you done surveys, or it is reflected in your Master Plan?) What impact is this challenge having on your community and/or its members?
  2. What do you intend to do with the funding?
  3. What outcome(s) are you aiming for/what do you want to achieve?
    - a. Would these outcomes support any part(s) of your Master Plan?
    - b. Would these outcomes have an impact on other aspects of your community, such as economic development, job creation, transportation investments, or other plans?
  4. How will you know if the project is a success/what will success look like?
  5. How do you know that your municipal leaders and citizens are ready to undertake this project?
3. A key element of this project is community outreach and engagement of community members. Who in your community would you like to reach out to and include in your project?

Next, please estimate your timeline of activities, and include estimates for what they may cost.  
For example :

Task	Activity	Timing	Who?	Estimated cost	notes
1	Public meetings 1.5 hours each	Sept 2019 - March 2020	Consultant and MTAG committee	3 x \$100 per hour = \$300 for consultant; \$100 for food (X2)	Intro to program, what do community members need?
2	Review current ordinances	Sept 2019 – March 2020	Consultant	10 x \$100 per hour = \$1000	
3	Recommendations to community – what to tackle?	April – May 2020	Consultant	10 hours x \$100 = \$1000	What does community think – where does it want to go?
4	Regulations re- write, create new	June – Sept 2020	Consultant and MTAG committee	3 x \$100 per hour = \$300 for consultant; \$100 for food	Meet with public after each draft
5	Final revisions; hearings	Sept – Nov 2020	Consultant	10 hours x \$100 = \$1000	
6	Language Acceptance by PB	Nov-Dec 2020	Consultant and MTAG committee		
7	Advocate for changes	Jan- march	Citizens, MTAG committee		
7	Town meeting vote	Spring 2021			

*(note: This is an example of format only. Actual timeline, for a typical program, may vary according to public engagement and other factors.*

Remember:

- At least 5% of your funds from Plan NH for this program **must** be spent on the community outreach and engagement piece.
- All of your 25% match funds **must** be expended before requesting MTAG funds.
- The final 25% of your MTAG funds will not be dispersed before you have completed your work and there is concrete evidence of your “product” (eg, a final ordinance proposal submitted for vote).

Please also provide documentation

- To verify need (if you already have it – e.g., Master Plan, discussion sessions).
- Of commitment to proceed:
  - Of pledge or actual cash match

- Of support from your City Council/Select Board, Planning Board and other key decision-makers or relevant organizations/individuals
- Of qualifications of your technical assistance consultant.

Please combine all of the above information into **one PDF file** and send, via email or Dropbox, to [info@plannh.org](mailto:info@plannh.org)

### SCORING CRITERIA

Criteria	Possible points
Supports demonstrated community plan or need	0-10
Strength of how the use of this grant will help achieve the desired outcome(s)	0-10
Community outreach and engagement	0-10
Readiness to proceed (e.g. studies, outreach already done?)	0-10
Broad community support (e.g. letters of support)	0-10
Total possible points	50

### APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Cover page (see page 9 for specifics to include)
  - ☐ Authorized signature
- ☐ Narrative (up to 3 pages) (see pages 9-10 for specifics to include) *Do not forget that this is about **housing**.*
- ☐ Community outreach and engagement – who will you include?
- ☐ Workplan/Budget
- ☐ Documentations:
  - ☐ Verification of need
  - ☐ Readiness to proceed
    - ☐ cash match documentation
    - ☐ letters of support
  - ☐ Qualifications of consultant(s)

## Plan NH's Municipal Technical Assistance Grant Program

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Q. Can a consultant apply for a Municipal Technical Assistance Grant to assist a municipality?
  - A. No, only incorporated New Hampshire cities and towns are eligible to apply. A consultant may assist in completing the application, but payment for doing so is not included in MTAG funds.
2. Q. What may the funds be used for?
  - A. The funds are for competitive grants for cities and towns who wish to ***increase housing options*** that address households with diverse needs and income levels.

The funds are to pay a consultant (who could be, but does not have to be, your regional planning commission) for technical assistance in reviewing, revising and/or creating zoning regulations or related as they ***relate to housing options***. In addition, at least 5% of the funds **must** be used for community outreach and engagement.
3. Q. What kinds of projects might qualify?
  - A. **Provided they are clearly intended to increase housing options**, eligible projects may include, but are not limited to:
    - Form-based codes;
    - Mixed-use zoning;
    - Inclusionary zoning and workforce housing solutions. Inclusionary zoning is defined in NH RSA 674:21 and can help a community fulfill its obligations under the NH Workforce Housing Law, RSA 674:58-61.
    - Lot-size averaging;
    - Village plan alternative zoning and subdivision regulations;
    - Regulatory standards promoting infill development;
    - Growth boundaries intended to maximize efficiency of infrastructure;
    - Transfer of development rights and density transfer credit codes;
    - Neighborhood heritage districts;
    - Building codes for energy-efficient rehabilitation of older structures;
    - Corridor planning to increase mixed-income housing near employment nodes;
    - Pedestrian- and transit-oriented development and affordable housing;
    - Economic development connecting housing and transportation investments; and
    - Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive, RSA 79-E.
    - Analysis of ordinances and regulations for workforce (or other) housing's economic viability.
4. Q. May we apply for assistance in writing a housing chapter for our Master Plan?
  - A. No. These funds are specifically for technical assistance in reviewing, re-writing or creating zoning regulations or ordinances related to housing. As mentioned above,

you may want to do this in support of/to meet the goals of your existing/current housing chapter.

5. Q. Is there any way we can find out if a project may be eligible for consideration before we dive into the whole application process?
  - A. Yes. You are welcome to write a brief description and send it to us with any questions you might have. Or call us. This will not add to or detract from your score.
6. Q. Our municipal planner spent a lot of time last year on a regulatory review. May we use grant funds to offset that cost if part of the grant will be used in support of establishing regulations based on those findings?
  - A. No. Grant funds may only be used to pay for consultant services provided in support of a MTAG Program-approved project, not any expenses incurred prior to grant award.
7. Q. We have an established relationship with a consultant who has worked extensively for my community in the past. Do we have to put grant-funded work out to competitive bid?
  - A. The MTAG Program does not require a competitive bidding process. However, we expect you to follow the procurement policies of your municipality.

The qualifications of your consultant *must* be included in your application.

8. Q: We don't want to go through the process of advertising for a consultant, interviewing and selecting until we are sure we have been selected for the program. Is there any way we can work through this?
  - A: Yes. You may mention this in your application, and include an outline of the RFP you would issue, including qualifications sought. If selected, you may then issue the RFP as soon as you can, and once the consultant is hired, we will finalize documents so that the project can begin. We will still require a specific timeline for your project, which we will work out with you.
9. Q. May two or more towns share an MTAG Program Grant?
  - A. Yes, as long as the grant will be administered by a single municipality. Note that *no matter the number of municipalities within one application, the funding limits (\$5000 - \$20,000) are per application, regardless of number of municipalities per application.*
10. Q. If my community receives an MTAG Grant but finds that it cannot spend the entire award, what should we do?
  - A. Contact the MTAG Administrator at Plan NH as soon as possible.
11. Q: Are we bound to a particular timeframe?
  - A. No. We will work with you and your consultant to figure out a timeline that makes sense for your project and your community.. And we recognize that things may come up that mean you need to extend it even if you are halfway through. That

is why the monthly reports will be so important – so that we know what is happening – otherwise, your grant could be in jeopardy.

12. Q. Can we use staff salaries used in support of the MTAG project to fulfill the cash match requirement?

A. No. The 25% cash match must be in the form of a grant, municipal funds or other source of funding which has been given directly to the municipality and shall be used as payment for consultant services, supplies, or other costs directly associated with the project **excluding** staff salaries and wages..

Any other inquiries may be directed to Robin LeBlanc at Plan NH

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