



INVESTNH MUNICIPAL PLANNING & ZONING GRANT PROGRAM: HOUSING OPPORTUNITY PLANNING GRANTS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the difference between the Community Housing Navigator grant and the Housing Opportunity Planning (HOP) grant?

The **Housing Opportunity Planning (HOP) Grant Program** allows municipalities to hire consultants to work on various phases of regulatory change to increase housing supply.

In contrast, the **Community Housing Navigator Program** is a one-time opportunity for municipalities to hire staff to work on community engagement and local regulatory change to increase housing supply. Community Housing Navigators will serve as local coordinators of housing regulatory changes and housing development activities, as well as working on at least one of the regulatory change phases identified in the HOP Grant Program.

See the information and application instructions for both programs at www.NHHOPgrants.org.

Can a community that has been awarded a Community Housing Navigator Program grant apply for a HOP grant?

Yes. While Community Housing Navigators must work on one of the phases identified in the HOP Grant Program, municipalities may also seek HOP grants to hire consultants to work on those and other phases of regulatory change.

When are the applications for the Housing Opportunity Planning (HOP) grant due?

Applications for the HOP grants will be accepted and awarded on a rolling basis. The three phases have staggered deadlines to encourage communities to apply for each of the three phases sequentially.

HOP applications are due as follows, but will be accepted on a rolling basis until these dates:

- First Phase - Needs Analysis and Planning Grants: Due no later than January 27, 2023.
- Second Phase - Regulatory Audits: Due no later than June 30, 2023.
- Third Phase - Regulatory Development: Due no later than November 15, 2023.



How often will decisions be made? How quickly can we expect a decision to be made after an application is submitted?

The Steering Committee meets weekly to discuss applications with the goal of awarding funds within 30 days of submission of a completed application.

Are towns that do not have zoning ordinances eligible to apply for the HOP grants?

Yes. There are 19 municipalities in NH that do not have zoning, but they do have planning boards that adopt master plans and subdivision regulations, both of which are eligible for work through HOP Grants.

Do the applications need to go to Governor and Council for approval?

No. The Steering Committee will make final decisions on grant applications.

What kinds of activities can the grants be used for? Can a grant to be used to update a community's master plan?

HOP Grants may be used for needs analysis and planning, regulatory audits, and regulatory development. For more information, visit www.NHHOPgrants.org. Funds may be used to update the master plan, but HOP Grants are limited to those sections of a master plan that relate to housing.

May we submit a draft of our application to the Steering Committee for feedback prior to submitting a final draft?

Yes. We encourage you to reach out to the Steering Committee to make an informal inquiry or submit a brief concept paper – we're happy to discuss your proposal before you apply. Please email info@NHHOPgrants.org.

What if we want to work with a consultant who isn't on the list of approved consultants?

A consultant may submit their qualifications to the Steering Committee at info@NHHOPgrants.org for review and potential approval at any time. See the Request for Qualifications at www.NHHOPgrants.org for more guidance.

If grantees undertake a competitive process for whatever reason to identify a consultant by issuing a Request for Qualifications or Request for Proposals, the municipality must submit the qualifications of their chosen consultant to the Steering Committee for approval, unless the consultant was already included on the list of approved consultants.



When is Housing Academy and what is the time commitment?

The first Housing Academy will begin with a kickoff webinar on October 7, 2022. Housing Academy will then meet in person or virtually once per month.

Participants in Housing Academy will be able to seek one-on-one guidance from Molly Donovan, at UNH Cooperative Extension, during her office hours.

Grantees awarded later in the process will be able to join Housing Academy at a later date.

Who should we invite to attend Housing Academy?

Each grantee should plan to send 1-3 people to Housing Academy. If space is available, grantees may be able to send additional people. Participants might include municipal staff, members of local land use boards or governing bodies, or other engaged citizens. In their application, applicants may include a budget request for a \$250 stipend per volunteer to attend Housing Academy. Municipal staff are not eligible for the stipend. *Note: Community Housing Navigators are expected to attend Housing Academy.*

Can communities use this funding to explore issues related to infrastructure (e.g., water and sewer)?

The purpose of the HOP Grant Program is to make regulatory changes to increase housing supply. But HOP grants may be used to review and revise housing-related sections of the local master plan and land use regulations, including whether public infrastructure should be expanded or used more efficiently to increase housing opportunities. HOP grants are not intended for infrastructure feasibility analyses.

For Phase 1 Needs Analysis grants, what is the expected relationship with the regional housing needs assessment?

For Phase 1 grants used to conduct needs assessments, the work should supplement but not duplicate the work done by the regional planning commission (RPC) in its regional housing needs assessment. Please confer with your RPC to understand the scope of its work.