



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

GOVERNOR NED LAMONT

## Governor Lamont Reinstates Small Town Grant Program to Support Local Capital Improvement Projects

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(HARTFORD, CT) – In an effort to support Connecticut’s municipalities while implementing projects that will give a boost to the economy and help in their response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Ned Lamont today announced that he is reinstating the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) – a state initiative that funds infrastructure improvement projects for towns that are otherwise ineligible to receive urban action bonds. To accomplish this, the governor is opening a new round of grants totaling \$15 million. The program has not been active since 2016, and Governor Lamont said that restoring it will provide much needed support to towns during a period of fiscal insecurity caused by the pandemic.

The governor is also implementing a special COVID-19 provision in this round that will support towns with expenditures related to their response to the pandemic, including for new construction, expansion, renovation, or replacement for existing facilities.

“Our small towns have been hit hard by COVID-19 and are in need of our help to fund these projects,” **Governor Lamont said**. “Simply put, some of our small towns need to modernize their infrastructure so that we can support efforts to grow the economy but lack the property tax base they need to fully fund these projects on their own. The state can and should do what we can to help with these costs, as these small towns drive tourism, honor our deep and celebrated history, and provide us with family-friendly getaways that are part of the New England experience.”

The governor is able to provide support for the program through the authorization of bonding in **Public Act 20-1**, in combination with other existing authorizations. The program is coordinated by the Office of Policy and Management, and grants are administered by the appropriate state agencies depending on the specific project involved.

Under state law, STEAP grants can only be used for capital projects. A project is considered to be a capital project if it is new construction, expansion, renovation, or replacement for an existing facility or facilities. Project costs can include the cost of land, design, engineering, architectural planning, and contract services needed to complete the project. **Towns selected for an award will be required to execute a contract with the state agency assigned to administer their grant before they incur any project-related expenditures.** Expenditures incurred prior to the execution of a contract will not be eligible for reimbursement.

The application period for this round will begin on July 13 and towns must apply by August 14. Recipient projects are expected to be announced in mid-September. Application materials will be published within the next several days on **the Office of Policy and Management’s STEAP website**, as well as **the Department of Administrative Services’ BizNet Contracting Portal**. The materials will include a list of eligible towns.