

NBRC Admin<admin@nbrc.gov>

To:Josh Arneson;Farnham, Kristie <Kristie.Farnham@vermont.gov>

Cc:Nance, Elisabeth <Elisabeth.Nance@vermont.gov>

Wed 8/21/2024 2:26 PM

Good afternoon,

Thank you for your email.

Based on the continued challenges and delays on this project, it is NBRC's recommendation that the Town return the existing award and reapply to our programs when these easement challenges have been resolved and a clear project timeline is known. As both NBRC and the State of Vermont review and score based on readiness, we highly recommend projects not apply until they have a true sense of project timeline and can demonstrate their project can be completed within a three-year window. As you mentioned, the status of this project does impact the Town's ability to apply to NBRC funding, as at this time the Town is not eligible to seek our funds due to the delinquent status of the 2021 award.

NBRC would be hesitant to allow another NTP extension, when no progress has been made from the prior year and we are looking at this funding sitting for three years with no activity. 2024 is the year the initial project should have been closing out, not requesting a third extension. The optics of the current grant do not look good currently. It is also important to note that the funds committed to this project cannot be utilized for any other purpose, and our programs are highly competitive and oversubscribed. Returning the funds now also allows us time to complete our internal processes so these funds can be made available to the State of Vermont in a future year.

Requesting the funds be returned, is a simple process, requiring the Authorized Official (AO) to submit an email to admin@nbrc.gov indicating their desire to return the funds and a brief explanation as to why that decision was reached. Requesting a return of an award has no bearing on the Town, meaning there is no penalty for returning the award either now or should the Town decide to reapply down the road. The Town remains an entity eligible for NBRC's funding.

I hope this feedback is helpful to the Town.

Please reach out with any additional questions or concerns.

Take care,

Andrea

Andrea K. Smith, Program Director

NBRC Team (admin@nbrc.gov)

NORTHERN BORDER REGIONAL COMMISSION

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Farnham, Kristie<Kristie.Farnham@vermont.gov>

To:Josh Arneson

Cc:Nance, Elisabeth <Elisabeth.Nance@vermont.gov>;NBRC Admin <admin@nbrc.gov>

Mon 8/26/2024 8:24 AM

Good morning,

Even if the current project eventually moves forward, because of the escalation in construction costs this award won't contribute to the effort to the same degree it would have if implementation had occurred on the timeline envisioned in 2021. For this reason and the reasons outlined by NBRC below, it is Vermont's strong recommendation that you move to deobligate.

My contact information appears below if you would like to discuss further.

Best,

Kristie Farnham (she, her) | Director of Business Support
Vermont Department of Economic Development

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