Northern Border Regional Commission

Timber for Transit Program Information Session

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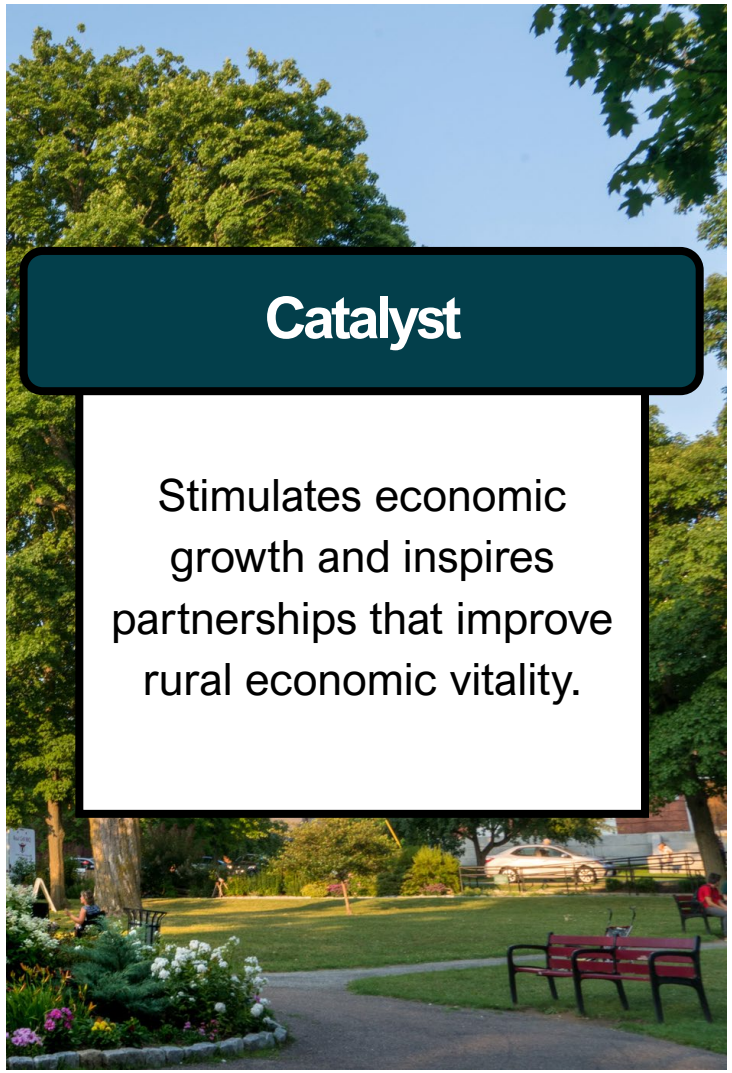
FOSTERING VIBRANT FUTURES FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES

AGENDA

- Existing resources
- Eligibility, match, and waivers
- Timber for Transit Program info
- Pre-Application requirements
- What's next
- Additional resources
- Q&A

NBRC'S THREE CORE GRANT PROGRAMS

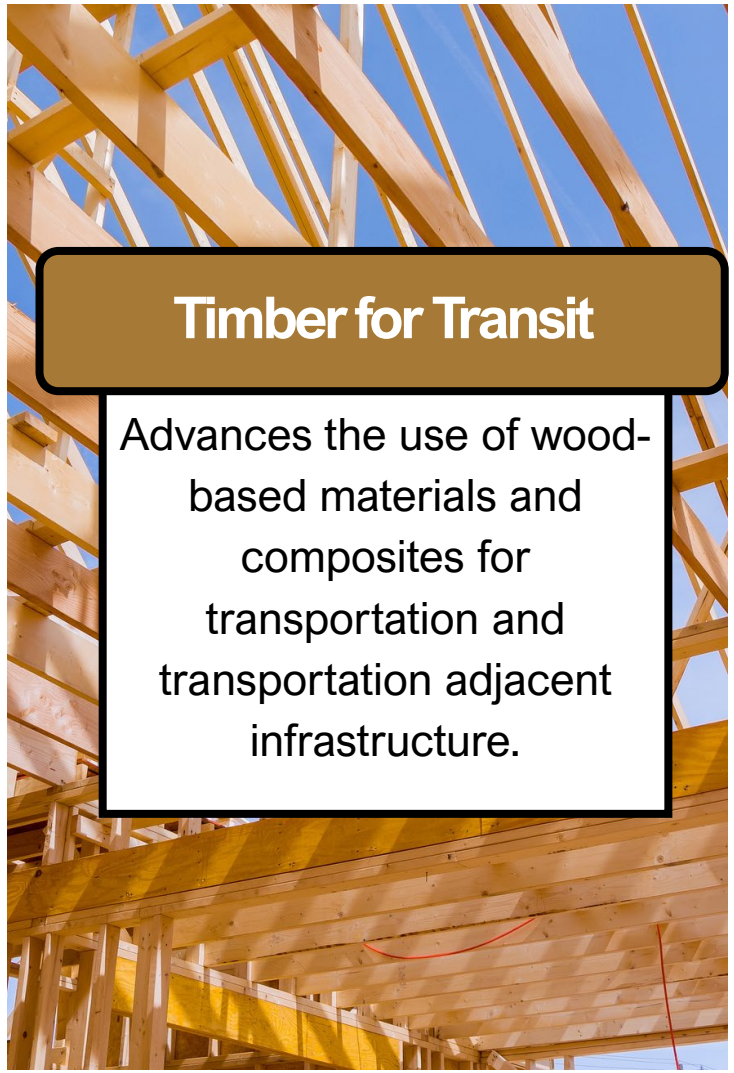


Catalyst

Stimulates economic growth and inspires partnerships that improve rural economic vitality.

Forest Economy

Supports the forest-based economy and assists in the industry's evolution to include new technologies and viable business models.



Timber for Transit

Advances the use of wood-based materials and composites for transportation and transportation adjacent infrastructure.

Program Overview Series

- **Part 1:** Funding Rounds, Timeline & Milestones, Next Steps and Contact information
- **Part 2**: Eligibility, Waivers and Match
- **Part 2A**: Determining Required Match
- **Part 3**: Funding Policies and Requirements
- **Part 4**: Local Development Districts
- **Part 5**: Catalyst Program Overview
- **Part 6**: Forest Economy Program Overview
- **Part 7**: Timber for Transit Program Overview

Review the Program Overview Series!

Resources: Program User Manual Part 2C

Determining Eligibility

Applicant Eligibility

Geographic Eligibility

- NBRC Service Area
- 2026 Distress Levels and Match Rates
- Determining Eligibility & Match/Reimbursement Ratios

Waivers Opportunities (if applicable, due with pre-application)

- 75% Expenditure Waiver
- Significant Benefits Waiver
- LDD Waiver

Determining Eligibility & Match

1. Determine organization eligibility
2. Determine if project location and applicant/co-applicant are in NBRC Service Area. Determine if your project will require waiver submission at pre-application.
3. Identify reimbursement and match rate associated with location.

Resources:

- NBRC Grant Programs User Manual– (Part 2C covers T4T)
- Project Eligibility and Match Determination

APPLICANT ELIGIBILTY

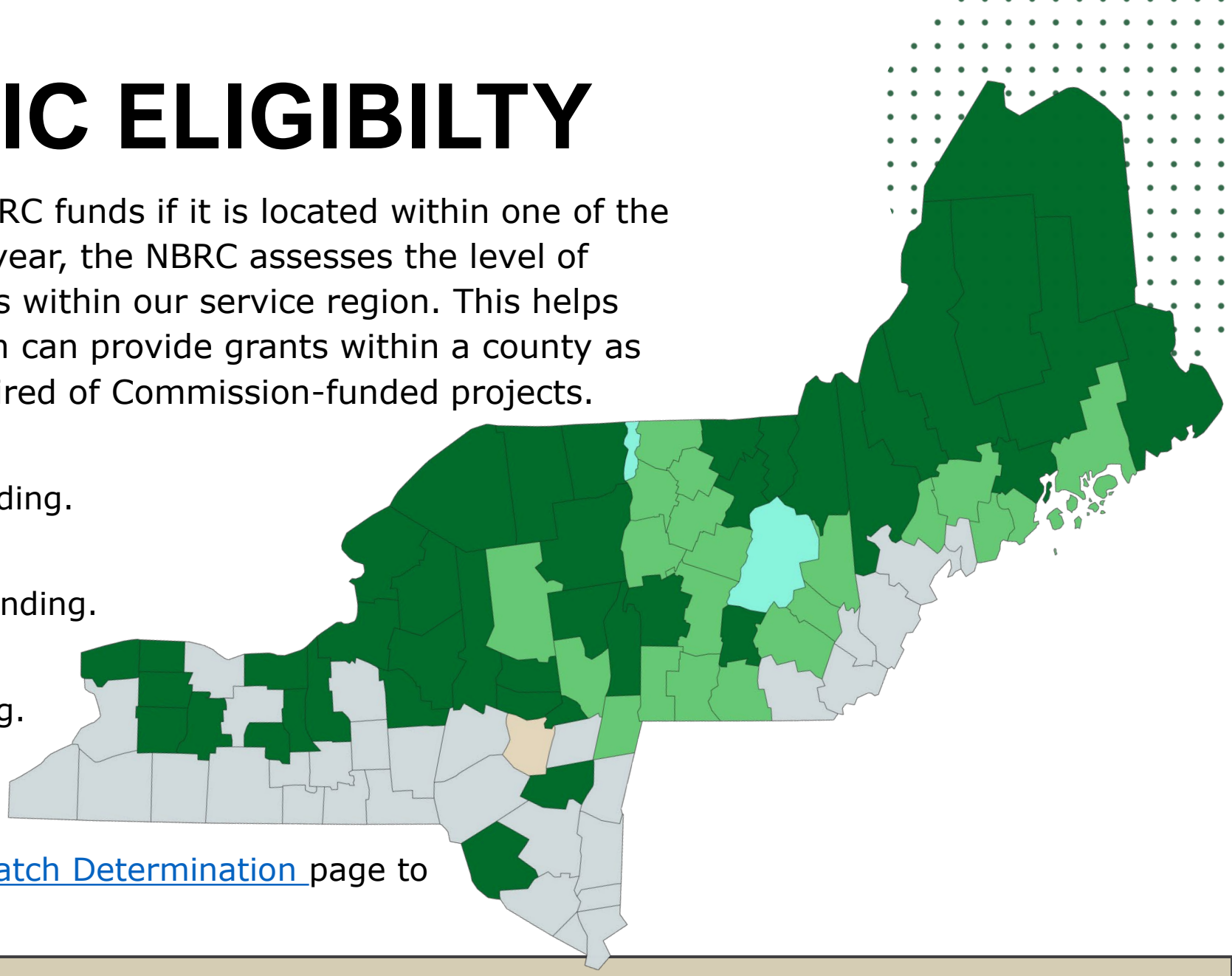
- **STATE GOVERNMENTS**
  Maine, New Hampshire, New York, and Vermont
- **SECONDARY AND CAREER TECHNICAL CENTERS**
- **LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**
  VILLAGE, TOWN, CITY AND COUNTY
- **NON-PROFITS**
  501(C) ORGANIZATIONS
- **OTHER POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS OF STATE**
  REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS, AUTHORITIES OF THE STATE
- **FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED INDIAN TRIBES**

For-profit entities, LLCs and other entities that are not a 501(c) are not eligible to apply for funding.

GEOGRAPHIC ELIGIBILTY

Your project may be eligible for NBRC funds if it is located within one of the counties in our service area. Each year, the NBRC assesses the level of economic and demographic distress within our service region. This helps determine whether the Commission can provide grants within a county as well as what level of match is required of Commission-funded projects.

- **Distressed:** Eligible for 80% funding. Requires a 20% match.
- **Transitional:** Eligible for 50% funding. Requires a 50% match.
- **Attainment**: Ineligible for funding. (Some exceptions apply.)



Visit NBRC's Project Eligibility and Match Determination page to learn more and access match tools.

Determining Match Rate

Review Part 2A of Program Overview Series!

2026: NEW Match Rate Determination

Background: Match rate (as mandated by Congress) is determined by the socio-economic indicators of your geography. Each assessment level has a corresponding match rate requirement.

Simplifying Terms: From "match and cost share" to just "match". Large and complex projects may choose to phase the work.

Getting More Granular: Beginning in 2026, NBRC evaluates distress in the region at both a county *and* community level, providing applicants with the option to choose the match rate that is most beneficial based on their project location(s).

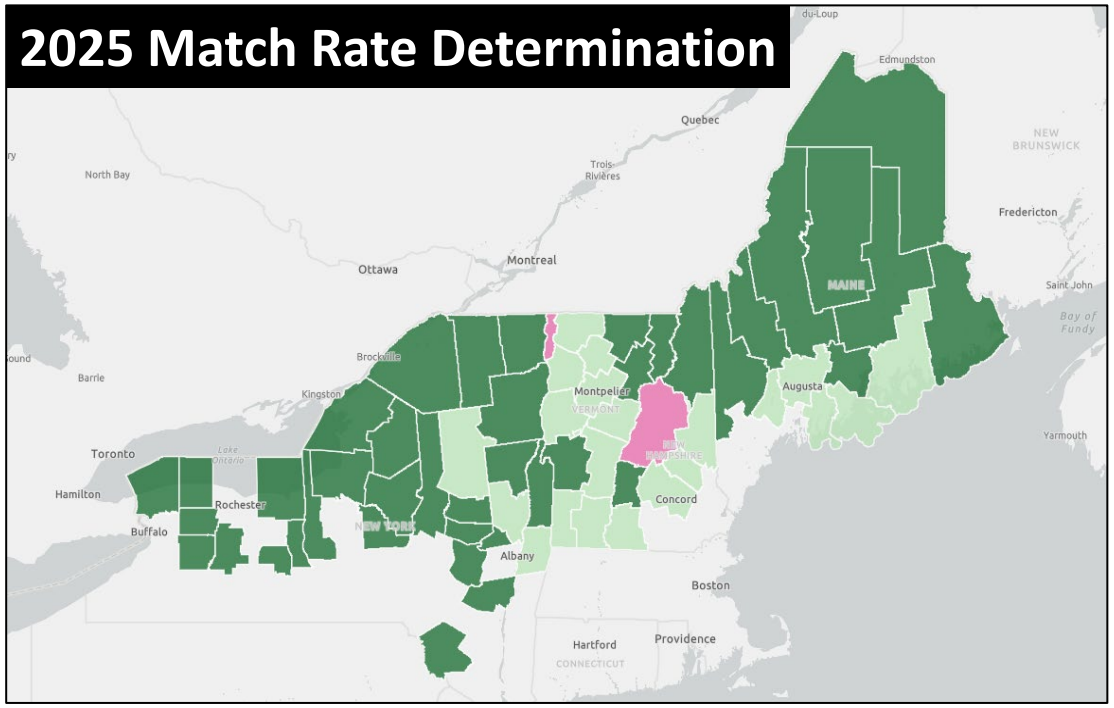
NBRC's 3 Match Tools: New tools have been developed to assist applicants in identifying their match rate.

Determining Match Rate Based on Project Location

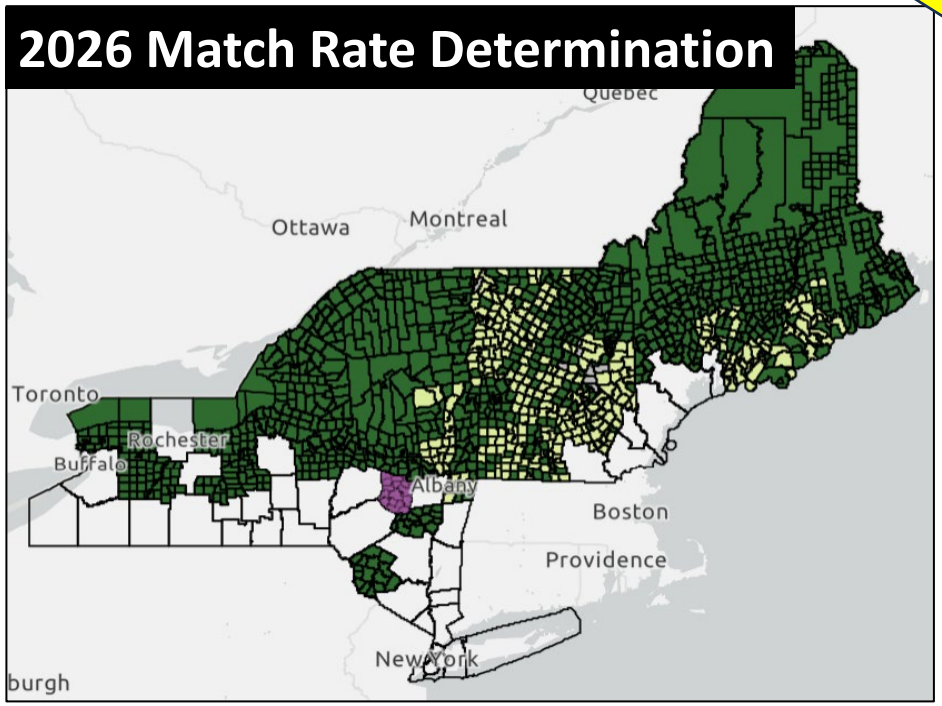
Find your GEOID for pre-application!

Drilling down to community level data **improves the match rate** for many communities.

2025 Match Rate Determination



2026 Match Rate Determination



New Tools to ID Project Match Rate:

1. **PDF List with Match Rate**
2. **Interactive Map**
3. **Match Rate Calculator**

Previous Award Recipients

An eligible applicant with an open or active NBRC award cannot receive an additional NBRC investment until the current award has both

- submitted reimbursement requests totaling 75% or more of the project and
- demonstrated that 75% of the match has been expended before the pre-application deadline

If the 75% expenditure requirement cannot be met, the applicant can apply for a waiver. The **75% Expenditure Waiver** must be submitted together with the pre-application.

Resources: NBRC Grant Programs User Manual

Applicants Outside NBRC Service Area

Entities eligible for a **Significant Benefit Waiver** are those who:

- Are located within an Attainment County but not within a Distressed or Transitional community, or
- Are located outside of the NBRC region but within a member state.

Entities eligible for a Significant Benefit Waiver must demonstrate the project will bring significant economic benefits to NBRC Distressed or Transitional communities or counties.

Reference NBRC's Grant Programs User Manual Part 3: Appendices for more information on the Significant Benefit Waiver and process to submit.

Local Development Districts

New in 2026: Requirement applies to T4T

All NBRC competitive program awards require the use of a Local Development District (LDD) for grant administration.

- ✓ Exception for state government entities and LDDs

LDDs are compensated for grant administrative work. The fee structure is as follows:

- $8,000 flat fee for awards of $400,000 or less
- 2% of NBRC requested amount for awards above $400,000.

A current list of participating LDDs can be found on the About LDDs page on NBRC's website

Resources: Program Overview Series Part 4

Timber for Transit Program

- Program Purpose
- Timeline
- Available Funding
- Project Categories
- Project Examples
- Program Evaluation Priorities
- State Priorities

Timber for Transit Program award history can be found on each of the NBRC state pages:
MAINE | NEW HAMPSHIRE | NEW YORK | VERMONT

Program Purpose

The Timber for Transit Program is designed ***to advance the use of domestic forest products in transportation infrastructure*** projects across Maine, New Hampshire, New York, and Vermont ***to showcase the capabilities of wood*** in these applications.

Available Funding

The Northern Border Regional Commission may award up to $14 million, available for projects that demonstrate the capabilities of wood in transportation infrastructure*.

Timber for Transit funding will be competitively awarded in two funding rounds

**Transportation infrastructure as defined for the Timber for Transportation program is further explained in the Grant Programs User Manual.*

Timeline and Key Dates

Spring Round

- Pre-applications AND Waivers Due: **February 27, 2026 (before 5:00pm EST)**
- Full Applications Due: **April 17, 2026 (before 5:00pm EST)**
- Grant Awards Announced: **June 2026**

Fall Round

- Pre-applications & Waivers Due: **August 28, 2026 (before 5:00pm EST)**
- Full Applications Due: **October 16, 2026 (before 5:00pm EST)**
- Grant Awards Announced: **December 2026**

Dates are subject to change. View the published 2026 NBRC Program Timeline for up-to-date information.

Program Eligible Purposes

Feasibility

Early-stage activities—such as planning, inventory assessments, engineering, design, cost benefit analysis, permitting, site assessments, and environmental assessments are **eligible for up to $1,000,000**

Implementation

Construction— such as assets and facilities that align with Timber for Transit program priorities are **eligible for up to $5,000,000.**

(Projects in this category requesting more than $1,000,000 must meet the program's higher maximum requirements.)

Timber in Transportation Infrastructure

Common examples…

- Vehicular and pedestrian bridges utilizing domestic wood components such as glue laminated timber (GLT) or composite decking
- Transportation and adjacent structures such as airports, highway rest areas, train depots/stations that utilize cross laminated timber (CLT)
- Outdoor recreation applications such as trail bridges, pedestrian walkways, welcome centers

Resources: Program User Manual Part 2C

Eligibility determined at pre-application!

Requesting the Higher Maximum

Projects requesting **more than $1,000,000** must address the higher maximum requirements. NBRC will consider awards up to $5,000,000 for projects that demonstrate at least one of the following:

- Project demonstrates alignment with two or more of the Program Investment Priorities of the program
- Project has been identified by NBRC or a State(s) as addressing a time-sensitive issue of magnitude or severity that will be addressed by the proposed project
- Construction takes place in two or more eligible communities/counties/states

NBRC Evaluation Priorities

- Commit to utilizing domestically sourced timber
- Demonstrate evidence of planning for extreme weather readiness, including but not limited to carbon capture, increased frequency and intensity of storm events, and sea level rise
- Utilize projects as a tool for university and industry education and training

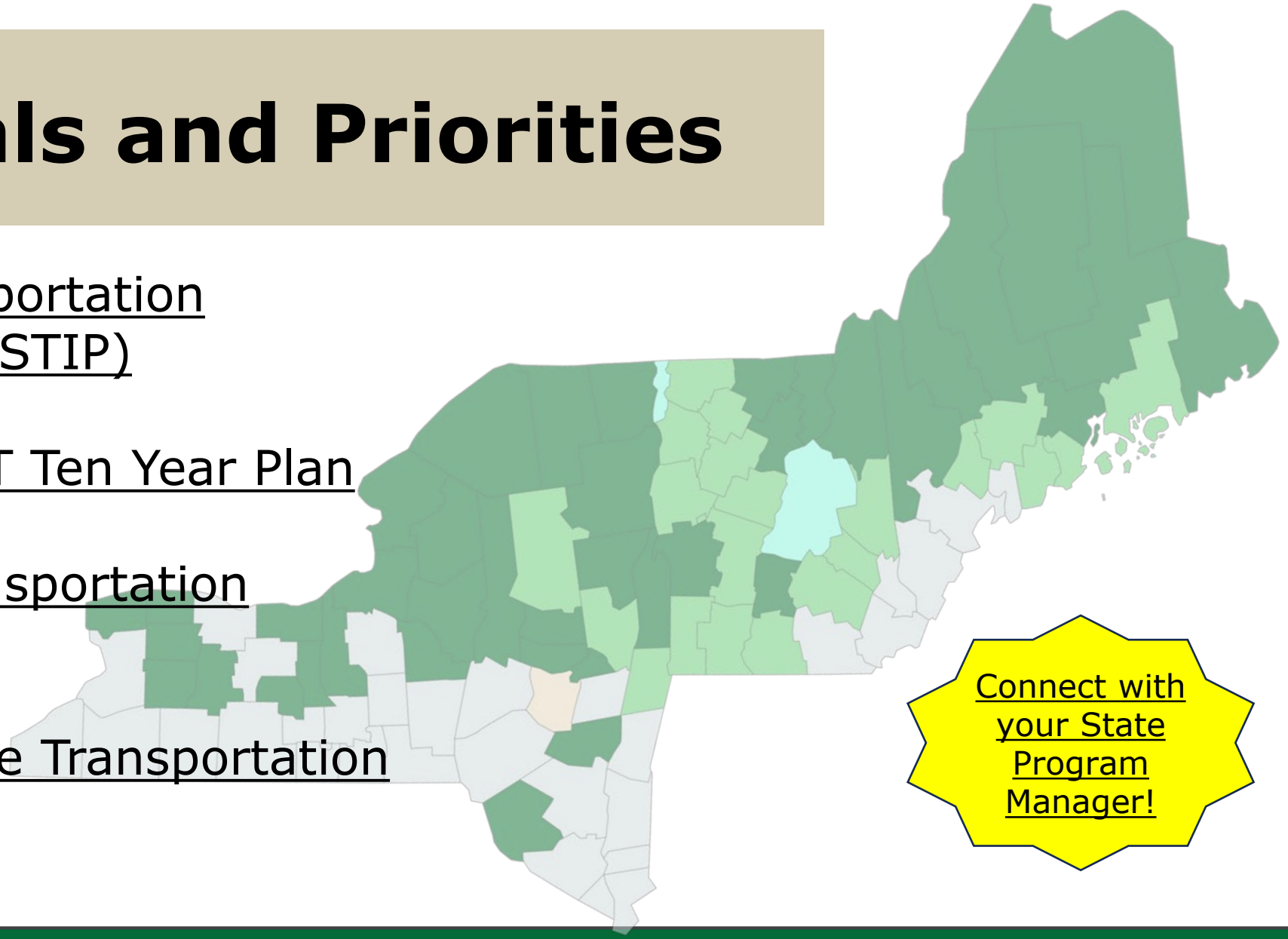
NBRC Evaluation Priorities

- Demonstrates alignment with state and community initiatives.
- Include promotion/publication/marketing as part of their project deliverables
- Support, benefit, or engage communities that are impacted by specific socio-economic indicators.

Resources: Program User Manual Part 2C

State Goals and Priorities

- ME Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP)
- New Hampshire DOT Ten Year Plan
- New York State Transportation Master Plan 2050
- Vermont Long-Range Transportation Plan



Connect with your State Program Manager!

FUNDED PROJECTS

VT Agency of Transportation

Franklin County, VT
(Feasibility)

Project Description

Feasibility study for a new Welcome Center near the Canadian border in Highgate. The study will evaluate site suitability, use of advanced wood products, and renewable heating options for the facility.

Town of Sand Lake

Rensselaer County, NY
(Implementation)

Project Description

Replace the Johnny Cake Lane bridge with a climate-resilient structure to improve hydraulic capacity, accommodate two-way traffic and pedestrians, and enhance safety and access for locals.

Town of Island Falls

Aroostook County, ME
(Implementation)

Project Description

Connects a community park to downtown via a Glue Laminated timber pedestrian bridge constructed using hemlock sourced from the town's 9,000-acre forest.

The full Timber for Transit Award History is available on the T4T Program page.

Pre-Application Process & Evaluation

- **Pre-Application Details:**
  - Process & Requirements, Evaluation
- **State Role in Pre-Applications**
- **Advisory Board Role in Pre-Applications**
- **What to Expect After the Pre-application**

Refer to the Program User Manual and GMS Resources!

Pre-Application: Process

All pre-applications must be submitted using NBRC's online grants management system.

- Requires registration (establishing a new user account, if not already established). Registration guidance document is available.
- You must "Qualify" for a funding opportunity to create your pre-application. Pre-application guidance document is available.

- **Resources**: Forms & Other Grant Administration Materials: | Northern Border Regional Commission

Pre-Application: Requirements

Applicant and Co-Applicant Information

- Applicant Organization
- Organization Type (eligible applicant type)
- Address
- Employer Identification Number (EIN)
- Unique Entity ID (UEI) - Applicant must enter a UEI to complete registration. Go to Sam.gov to receive your UEI.

This info will be collected during GMS registration.

This information will be requested as part of the registration process and transferred to the pre-application.

Pre-Application: Requirements

Applicant characteristics

- Previous award recipient (If yes, enter NBRC award #)
- Rural community (defined as population less than 5,000)

Primary Place of Performance – where will the project take place?

- Address including zip code
- County

Project Title

This information will be requested as part of the pre-application.

Pre-Application: Requirements

Budget Narrative

- Description of expenses over $5,000 by category
- Table describing match sources: source, federal v non-federal, and status of match

Budget Details

- Requested NBRC funds
- Match and Cost Share funds
- Total Project Costs

This info is submitted in the GMS. There are no additional budget documents to upload for pre-application.

Funds will need to be allocated across budget categories

Pre-Application: Requirements

Pre-application budget categories

- Personnel
- Fringe Benefits
- Travel and Transportation
- Equipment
- Supplies and Materials
- Consultants
- Contracts and Sub-Grantees
- Construction
- Other Direct Costs
- Indirect Costs

- These budget categories align with the SF-424cbw.
- Pre-applications DO NOT require the SF-424cbw form, but full applications (by invitation only) will.

Pre-Application: Requirements

Narrative Questions:

- Project Abstract
- Project Goals, Outcomes and Outputs
- Program Investment Priorities
- Project Beneficiaries and Community Context
- Statement of Need

- All narrative text boxes have a 5,000-character limit and formatting/editing capabilities.
- Applicants encouraged to have narrative responses available in a word processing document to easily copy and paste into the pre-application.

Pre-Application: Requirements

Project Abstract – Narrative

- Provide a summary of the proposed project.
- What NBRC eligible purpose and project category does this project address?
- Describe the status of the project – ready for implementation, planning tasks ongoing, early stages.
- What is the project scope? Over what period of time will this project be completed?

Pre-Application: Requirements

Project goals, outcomes, and outputs - Narrative

- What are the expected economic outcomes (e.g. impacts on jobs, employment and wage growth) of this project
- Describe the scale of expected economic impacts on the community, county, or region

Resources:

Grant Programs User Manual Part 3: Appendix E – Key Performance Indicators

Pre-Application: Requirements

Program Evaluation Priorities - Narrative

- Identify and demonstrate how the project addresses program Evaluation Priorities.
- Identify and demonstrate how the project addresses relevant state priorities.

Resources:

- Grant Programs User Manual Part 2C: Timber for Transit Program, and
  - Part 3: Appendix K – Timber for Transit Program Scoring Criteria.

Pre-Application: Requirements

Project Beneficiaries and Community Context - Narrative

- Who will benefit?
- Why does this project matter to the community?
- If applicable, how does this project serve or benefit rural communities with populations of less than 5,000 or underrepresented communities?
- If applicable, how does this project help communities plan for extreme weather readiness?
- Address whether/how the project supports regional, state, or local transportation planning efforts.

Pre-Application: Requirements

Statement of Need - Narrative

- What is the challenge or problem the project seeks to address?
- What is the proposed solution?
- Why is this project important?
- Describe the opportunity gained by funding this project now.
- Why is NBRC funding important for this project?

Evaluation of Pre-Applications

NBRC and the States will consider a project's alignment with the funding priorities for these program dollars when both issuing invitations to apply at the pre-application phase and in scoring projects at the application phase.

Resources:

- Grant Programs User Manual Part 2C: Timber for Transit Program, and
  - Part 3: Appendix K – Timber for Transit Program Scoring Criteria.

Pre-Application: Evaluation

When issuing invitations to apply at the pre-application phase, NBRC and the States will also consider:

- the costs and expected benefits associated with the requested NBRC investment;
- the projects identified as a state priority;
- the benefits provided to the broader community and region.

Pre-Application: Evaluation

State Program Manager Role

- Project Development
- Review and assess pre-applications for alignment with Timber for Transit Program priorities and local and state transportation initiatives and planning efforts

Resources

Complete the Project Interest Form prior to requesting a meeting with State Program Managers

What's Next

- ✓ **Determine Eligibility**
- ✓ **Review Resources – Grant Programs User Manual, Overview Series, State Priorities,**
- ✓ **Self classify your project according to project categories and investment priorities**
- ✓ **Self evaluate project against T4T scoring criteria**
- ✓ **Complete a project interest form and connect with your State Program Manager**
- ✓ **Project Development**
- ✓ **Review GMS resources and complete registration**
- ✓ **Begin developing your pre-application responses!**

Grant Program
Resources

- **Grant Programs User Manual and Timeline** are available now!
- The **Pre-Application Support page** holds recorded sessions, the Program Overview Series, and manuals.
- **Timber for Transit Program page**
- **Grant Management System** – resources for submitting pre-applications in the GMS.

Thank you!
Questions?

Marina Caceres, Program Manager