

# Granite City Community-Innovation Funding Letters of Interest

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) established the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) which provides \$350 billion to state and local governments across the nation for the response to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Of Vermont's \$1.25 billion share, over \$200 million (about \$300 per Vermonter) was allocated to municipalities. Barre City received \$2.5 million.

## Program Details

### **Why is Barre requesting letters of interest for potential grant funding?**

This special, one-time funding is intended to support transformative projects leveraged by additional funding from outside organizations, helping Barre respond to and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **What are allowable uses of the funds?**

The U.S. Department of Treasury, the [Vermont League of Cities and Towns \(VLCT\)](#), and other organizations have issued guidance on the allowable use of funds. The City will evaluate proposals to ensure eligibility prior to proceeding with applications.

### **Who is eligible to apply?**

Groups of people, individuals or organizations working for the public benefit in Barre City, Vermont.

### **How could funds be disbursed?**

Although no details are final, prospective funding may be disbursed in up to three phases (an initial payment to get started, a mid-term payment upon demonstration of progress, and a final payment upon completion of remaining documentation).

### **What record-keeping will be expected of grantee?**

All applicants will be expected to keep detailed records of every transaction and provide invoices and proof of payment.

### **How will projects be evaluated?**

Eligible projects will be evaluated by a review panel to be determined at a later stage. The criteria may include but will not be limited to:

- Clearly defined need
- Outcome-based impact (how will the project improve the lives of the people of Barre City)
- Cost-effectiveness
- Leverage (extent to which project has additional outside funding and support)
- Readiness (is the project well framed, well-backed, and able to be implemented)

### **What is ineligible?**

At this time, the following will not be considered for funding:

- Any partisan or political activities (or organizations that use funding for partisan or political activities)
- Projects incompatible with the City's plans or regulations
- Ongoing operational costs or reimbursement of expenses that occurred before the grant was issued
- The establishment of reserve funds for use beyond the grant cycle
- The purchase of materials or equipment unrelated to the grant
- Paying staff or volunteers to administer the grant

### **When should letters of interest be submitted?**

Letters of interest will be accepted on a rolling basis beginning **September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022**. Due to capacity constraints for related public outreach on the use of the City's ARPA funds, no final application deadline, review process, or award schedule has been established at this time but could be as early as December 2022. Updates to the process will be communicated widely, including via the [Barre City website](#). The letters of interest will help the City and Council understand projects as part of its ongoing outreach. People and organizations will be invited to apply based on their letter of interest. All projects must target a completion date by December 2026.

## Letter of Interest

### Prospective Applicant

Organization Name/Applicant Name

Barre Opera House

Mailing Address

Website (if one is available)

www.barreoperahouse.org

Name of Primary Contact for Application

Dan Casey

Phone Number of Primary Contact

Organizational Status (such as a City Committee, 501(c)(3) non-profit, etc.)

501 c 3

If defined, what is the mission of your organization?

Our mission is to preserve, promote and operate the Barre Opera House as a center for the performing arts serving Central Vermont and its visitors.

If different from the applicant, who will be the primary project manager?

N/A

What is the background and experience of the project manager as it relates to this project?

Dan Casey has worked at the Barre Opera House for 17 years, 15 as director. During that time he has overseen many projects, most recently a \$1.2M renovation, that have improved the facility.

If your organization has done similar project(s), please describe the project(s), when they occurred, and any measurable results and goal-based outcomes.

Since 1982, when the Opera House reopened after a four-decade hiatus in which the original seats, lights and sets were removed and the space fell into disrepair, the staff, board and volunteers of the organization have worked to restore the theater to its original splendor and to equip it from a technical standpoint as a fully functional operating theater.



## Project Overview & Impact

### **Briefly summarize your project:**

To accent and illuminate the architectural details of the Barre Opera House/City Hall facade and provide better illumination of sidewalks on Main Street, Prospect Street and Merchant's Row by installing energy-efficient, weather-resistant and color-changing LED fixtures with focusable beam patterns that minimize excess ambient light. The system will offer static and dynamic lighting control with calendar, time of the day and manual controls.

### **How did you determine the need for this project?**

Initially, the idea came about in order to create a greater presence for the Opera House. We found that on show nights passersby on Main Street would likely be unaware anything was happening in the building, even if we had a sold-out performance. Safety for our patrons and for pedestrians walking by the building any night is also a major concern, particularly on Prospect Street. Attendees have often complained to us over the years that it's difficult to see where they're going on their way into the theater. Finally, the lighting would illuminate the beautiful Italianate architecture of this, one of the key buildings in downtown Barre.

### **How will your project transform Barre City and provide public benefit for its people in a positive way for years to come?**

It will serve to beautify the city center, provide an attractive nighttime backdrop for activities happening in City Hall Park, will provide safer walkways and it will create greater awareness of the Barre Opera House, central Vermont's premier performing arts center. These enhancements could ultimately contribute additionally to the economic development of the downtown.

### **How will you measure and evaluate the success of your project beyond inputs?**

The aesthetic value of the project will become immediately apparent. Tasteful lighting will create a stronger sense of place and more welcoming and safer night-time environment. We're confident that public comments regarding the lighting project will be positive. Less measurable immediately, but significant in the longer-term, will be increased attendance at the Opera House and an elevated economic impact on other businesses in the downtown.

## Estimated Project Budget

What is the total cost of your project? Please identify any ongoing and/or recurring costs.

\$111,114.

How did you estimate or determine the cost of your project?

Quote from Vincent Lighting, who we've worked with to choose appropriate fixtures and configuration

How much ARPA funding are you requesting from the City of Barre?

\$86,114, Vincent Lighting's quote for the cost of the lighting equipment. The remaining \$25,000 is an informal estimate for the electrical work. Vincent has indicated the equipment pricing will likely go up after 1/1/23.

Would this funding be used as minimum required match for other funds?

Yes

No

What are the other prospective sources of funding and are they secured?

Funding Source	Funding Amount	Secured (yes or no)
LED Lighting Equipment	\$ 86,114	No
Electrical Installation	\$ 25,000	Yes
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	

## Project Approach

### How long is the project estimated to last and when will it be complete?

After funding acquisition, the actual installation should be less than a month. The hope is that lighting will be in place by late spring 2023.

### Will your project involve contracted or sub-contracted components?

Yes

No

### If yes, please describe (1) which components will be contracted and/or sub-contracted, (2) how contractors and/or sub-contractors will be selected to obtain the best value for taxpayer funding, and (3) how favoritism and conflicts of interest will be avoided?

While we've worked with Vincent Lighting to design the system, we may choose to put the equipment costs out to bid. The selected lighting company will be one subcontractor. We'll require an electrician to wire the system, so that will be a second subcontractor. That selection will also be based on a bid and also familiarity with local electrical businesses.

### Complete the Work Plan & Budget Breakdown

*Actions should break down the project into milestone parts and not be overly detailed or overly broad.*

Action <i>(e.g. build a trail bridge)</i>	Materials <i>(e.g. lumber for trail bridge)</i>	Responsibility <i>(e.g. contracted trail crew)</i>	Budget	Target Completion Date
Final planning for LED facade lighting	N/A	BOH/City staff		12/31/22
Equipment purchases and acquisition	Lighting equipment	Equipment supplier, BOH	\$86,114	5/1/23
Electrical installation of new lighting	Electrical supplies	Electrician, BOH	\$25,000	5/30/23

## Submission

Submit completed form to:

**Roxanne Pike**

Executive Assistant to the City Manager

[ExecAssist@barrecity.org](mailto:ExecAssist@barrecity.org)

Please use "ARPA Letter of Interest – [Organization/Applicant Name]" in the email subject line.