



Infrastructure Bank Program

F R E Q U E N T L Y A S K E D Q U E S T I O N S (F A Q)

1. Q: What is the Venango County Infrastructure Bank (VCIB) Program?

A: VCIB is a loan financing program for municipal entities (i.e. eligible borrowers) for the design and construction of infrastructure improvements, created by the County. The County will issue new debt and in-turn provides subsidized reduced interest loans for its municipalities, making infrastructure projects more affordable. The County intends to maintain annual set-aside funding with the ultimate goal of creating an ongoing loan fund/financing stream.

2. Q: Why would I apply for a loan from the VCIB versus Federal, State, or private loan programs?

A: Recipients of VCIB loans may receive financing at reduced interest rates for a fixed term lower than may be available through alternative conventional financing institutions. VCIB loan recipients may also take advantage of the "Turnkey" Project Design and Delivery option for Applicants who may not have the necessary capacity to design proposed projects effectively. The Program Engineer will oversee and lead the project delivery process from planning and design through project completion. This Turnkey process combines the project delivery capabilities of the Program Engineer with Applicant resources to ensure projects are completed in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

3. Q: Who is eligible to apply for a loan from the VCIB?

A: The following entities may apply for VCIB loans (must be based in Venango County and eligible for tax-exempt borrowing):

- Municipalities
- Municipal Authorities

(Note that school districts, redevelopment and economic development entities may potentially be beneficiaries of VCIB funding for public infrastructure related projects through cooperation with an eligible applicant, dependent upon proposed use of the proceeds, security and repayment, but are not permitted to apply directly to the VCIB Program at this time.)

4. Q: What type of projects are eligible for VCIB loan financing?

A: Projects eligible for the VCIB Program must be eligible activities and will focus on the following:

- Construction, reconstruction, non-routine maintenance and repair of roadways, bridges and public transportation and related public infrastructure.
- Construction, reconstruction, non-routine maintenance and repair of water, wastewater and stormwater systems/related infrastructure.

5. Q: Are all project costs eligible for payment with VCIB loan proceeds?

A: No. Eligible project costs include the following:

- Planning/engineering/design/inspection
- Environmental site assessments and studies
- Land/easement acquisition/right-of-way necessary to construct the eligible project
- Construction/expansion/improvement/repair/rehabilitation of public infrastructure
- Traffic signs/signals/control/lighting/crosswalks
- Demolition of structures/clearing and preparation of land necessary for eligible project construction
- Permit fees/inspection costs
- Utility relocation
- Legal fees
- Administrative costs associated with the financing (to be determined, in part, and confirmed by the County at the time of application approval)

Please be advised that the above list of eligible uses does not constitute program eligibility. Municipalities should consult with the County regarding specific eligibility questions. All Applicants must attend a pre-application conference to be considered for the VCIB Program.

6. Q: Is there a maximum or minimum VCIB loan amount or percentage of project costs that an approved Applicant can receive?

A: There is no minimum or maximum amount of project size or loan financing that may be awarded to an individual project. Loan amounts will be determined based on the scope of the proposed project, the amount of leveraged funds available to the Applicant through other public and private sources, the agreement of the Applicant and/or host municipality to support the creditworthiness necessary to repay the loan, and overall demand for the VCIB Program. The County will also consider the project's impact on regional public infrastructure goals (relating to transportation, water, wastewater & stormwater), public health and safety, and economic development when determining subsidized loan financing awards. Applicable Cost of Issuance Contributions associated with securing VCIB loans will be financed as eligible project

costs and included in the final principal amortization schedule.

7. Q: What are the VCIB loan terms regarding interest, repayment and security?

A: The maximum term for a VCIB loan is 10 years, unless otherwise determined by the Board of Commissioners. Repayments will be structured as semi-annual payments of interest and annual payments of principal, resulting in approximately level annual debt service over the 10-year period. Eligible Applicants may receive up to a 1.50% interest rate subsidy on the financing secured by the County. The final loan and payment terms will be determined following the issuance of County financing. All VCIB Program loans must be secured by the Applicant. The expectation is for VCIB loans to be secured by the full faith and credit of a taxing authority, but the County reserves the right to accept other forms of security upon credit review in accordance with Section 6 of the Program Guidelines.

8. Q: What financial metrics might be used by the VCIB Program to assess creditworthiness/Applicant qualifications?

A: In order to be considered for financing through the VCIB Program, all Applicants must demonstrate creditworthiness. The evaluation of creditworthiness will include, but is not limited to, the following factors, which may be adjusted by the County as deemed necessary:

- Ability to demonstrate an investment grade rating (Standard & Poor's BBB-rating or its equivalent. If a rating is not available, then the County may conduct a review using an equivalent methodology to be determined by the County).
- Ability to demonstrate compliance with timely completing and submitting audited financial statements for the most recent three-year period.
- For Municipal Authorities, ability to demonstrate sufficient remaining life, under its Articles of Incorporation, to complete the financing.
- All Applicants must not be in default of any financial obligations.

9. Q: Will the financial statements provided by private entities as part of the VCIB loan application credit review process be kept confidential?

A: The VCIB Advisory Board intends to keep all documents submitted and designated as "confidential" or "proprietary" by eligible Applicants to the extent the documents are exempt from disclosure under the Right-to-Know Law.

10. Q: What is the "Turnkey" delivery option and how does it differ from the "Finance Only" project delivery option?

A: To ensure timely completion of projects funded by the VCIB Program, approved projects may take advantage of the "Turnkey" Project Design and Delivery option. If an Applicant selects the Turnkey option, they will independently contract with the VCIB Program Engineer to provide resources necessary to design and implement an

approved project, and to oversee and lead the project delivery process from planning and design through project completion. This Turnkey process combines project delivery capabilities of the Program Engineer with Applicant resources to ensure projects are completed in an efficient and cost-effective manner, and in compliance with any applicable time restrictions associated with the County-secured financing. The delivery process will fulfill the Applicant project requirements and ensure adherence to both the County's and Applicant's schedule, as well as legal and fiduciary requirements. The Program Engineer will administer all phases of the project including planning, design, permitting, bid document preparation, bidding, contracting (including administering contracts between necessary vendors and the Applicant/loan recipient to complete the project), and commissioning. The County will not be a party to the Applicant's contract with the Program Engineer. The "Finance Only" Project Design and Delivery option allows the Applicant to utilize their own professional to design, permit, and prepare plans and specifications for the proposed project, to be reviewed by the County.

11. Q: Are there any pre-application requirements?

A: Applicants interested in funding through the VCIB Program must request a pre-application conference with the County. Pre-application conferences must be complete per the published County approved schedule. The required conference is designed to provide potential Applicants with an overview of the Program, application process and eligibility, and assistance with budget development to assure the completeness of the project application for formal submission and review.

During the pre-application conference, the County's VCIB Program consultants and/or staff will discuss the proposed project with the Applicant, answer VCIB Program questions, and gather additional project details.

An important outcome of the pre-application conference will be the development of the Project Budget for the VCIB Program Application. The County's engineering consultant will review the project budget and provide confirmation or recommended changes for both the Applicant's and the County's consideration and concurrence when processing the application. The mutually concurred Project Budget will serve as the basis for determining the project's financing need.

To schedule the mandatory pre-application conference, email request to hbuchanan@co.venango.pa.us.

12. Q: How are the VCIB loan applications evaluated?

A: The VCIB Advisory Board will review applications and make recommendations to the County Board of Commissioners based on the Applicant's creditworthiness, as well as the project's constructability and overall consistency with the VCIB Program statement of purpose; identified outcomes, such as the impact on water/wastewater/stormwater service, traffic congestion, public health and safety, and economic development; and ability to meet the overall VCIB Program objectives. The following is an expanded list

of potential project evaluation criteria:

- Successfully adhere to the application process and guidelines, including mandatory attendance at the pre-application conference and board presentation.
- Ability of the Applicant to demonstrate creditworthiness and secure any additional project funding necessary to complete the project.
- Level of non-County funds secured and available to the project (i.e. private investment leveraged).
- Project cost effectiveness when compared to other alternatives and project ability to efficiently serve County residents and visitors.
- Project readiness.
- Ability of the project to demonstrate local support.
- Ability to secure funding from other sources.
- Project consistency with all local economic development plans and ability to support job creation/retention in the County.
- Ability of the project to address public health and safety.
- Ability of the project to incentivize and support major economic development projects and/or new or existing tourism initiatives.

13. Q: When are VCIB applications due and where should they be submitted?

A: Please submit electronic copy or one (1) hardcopy of the completed application with the required attachments and exhibits to hbuchanan@co.venango.pa.us prior to the due date and time listed on the VCIB Application.

Venango County Infrastructure Bank Advisory Board
c/o Hilary Buchanan, Executive Director Venango County Regional Planning
Commission
Venango County
1168 Liberty Street, P.O. Box 831
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Note that e-mail submissions cannot exceed 10MB and attachments need to be in word, excel or pdf format. Zip files will not be accepted. You may submit multiple e-mails. If more than one e-mail is necessary to complete the submission, please use the Subject Line of the e-mail to label the number of submissions (e.g. "Municipality - VCIB Application 1 of 3").

14. Q: How many copies of the VCIB loan application are required to be submitted?

A: Applicants must submit an electronic copy of the completed application with all required attachments and exhibits as provided in the program guidelines by the deadline stated on the VCIB Application.

15. Q: When are VCIB project loans approved?

A: Applicants should check the Venango County website for the current schedule of dates and deadlines applicable to the VCIB loan program cycle. The VCIB loan approval date is subject to change at any time as may be determined by the VCIB Advisory Board and Venango County Board of Commissioners.

16. Q: What is the VCIB loan program approval process?

A: The VCIB Advisory Board intends to follow the process described below. Applicants are encouraged to check the Venango County website for the current schedule of important dates and deadlines applicable to the current VCIB loan Program cycle and approval process:

- The VCIB Advisory Board will complete a review period to confirm eligibility requirements established by the VCIB Program Guidelines. Any questions regarding eligibility can be directed to hbuchanan@co.venango.pa.us.
- Applicants considered for award will be required to make a public presentation to the VCIB Advisory Board. The general public will have an opportunity to comment at the Venango County Commissioner's meeting when the projects are presented to the Commissioners for funding consideration. Written comments will also be accepted. Invited Applicants will be notified of the date and time of the public presentation.
- Following public presentations, the County reserves the right to schedule follow-up meetings or request additional information. Such meetings would be held to ensure all Applicant and project related questions are addressed. Additional meetings will not have an impact on evaluation criteria when rendering final award decisions. The VCIB Advisory Board will establish a deadline for submitting written comments or materials.
- After public presentations have been completed and all written responses have been received, the final review process will ensue. The VCIB Advisory Board will review projects for creditworthiness and constructability, and use the evaluation criteria, as outlined in Section 6 of the Program Guidelines, to evaluate and rank projects, and make recommendations to the Venango County Board of Commissioners.
- Loan awards will be announced during a public meeting of the Venango County Board of Commissioners. Applicants receiving loan awards will also be notified by letter (as described below). The County reserves the right to approve or reject any project based on eligibility and project merits as outlined within the current

program guidelines, which are subject to change due to changes in law affecting the County's ability to borrow funds.

17. Q: How are VCIB loan application approvals/denials communicated to Applicants?

A: Following the public meeting, Applicants will receive written communication from the County advising of the loan approval/denial, as applicable.

18. Q: What is the procedure for accessing the VCIB loan funds?

A: Upon approval of an application, a commitment letter will be issued to the Applicant that outlines the terms and conditions of the VCIB loan. The commitment letter must be signed and returned within 30 days or the offer may be withdrawn. Following the acceptance of an offer by the Applicant and the satisfactory completion of applicable special conditions, a loan closing will be scheduled. Loan recipients will be required to work with the County's appointed Note Counsel to complete Local Government Unit Debt Act proceedings or, if applicable, have an applicable guarantor complete such proceedings. The County and the Applicant will finalize the terms of the loan agreement, including collateral, repayment schedule, and the process for use of non-VCIB funds towards project construction, if any. The Applicant will be required to certify that the expenses during construction were incurred in accordance with the final design plans approved by the Applicant and the County.

All vendor contracts will be executed between the Applicant and vendor. During the project activity period, the County will receive and review project costs to confirm eligibility and determine the appropriate release of loan funds in accordance with an agreed upon schedule for the release of loan proceeds. The Applicant will be responsible for loan payments to the County in accordance with the terms and conditions of the VCIB loan documents executed at closing.

19. Q: Are administrative costs included in the VCIB loan?

A: Yes. In addition to administrative costs associated with securing the financing, the following eligible project costs can also be included in the VCIB loan:

- Planning/engineering/design/inspection
- Environmental site assessments and studies
- Land/easement acquisition/right-of-way necessary to construct the eligible project
- Construction/expansion/improvement/repair/rehabilitation of public infrastructure
- Traffic signs/signals/control/lighting/crosswalks
- Demolition of structures/clearing and preparation of land necessary for eligible project construction
- Permit fees/inspection costs

- Utility relocation
- Legal fees

20. Q: How are project cost overruns handled during the project?

A: Project cost overruns are the responsibility of the borrower. Careful consideration by all parties is given to manage and avoid cost overruns.

Any additional questions about the VCIB program not previously covered in the Program Guidelines, FAQs or Definitions and Terms should be directed to:

Venango County Infrastructure Bank Advisory Board
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Venango County
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