



Federal Funding Action Plan for the Town of New Paltz

Objective

Merchant McIntyre Associates proposes to help the Town of New Paltz secure an unprecedented amount of federal support on a regular basis.

Federal funding will be achieved through federal competitive and discretionary grants and Congressionally Directed Spending.

The ultimate objective is for every federal dollar we secure to provide budget relief and/or help the Town take a leap forward on initiatives to better serve your citizens.

Situation Analysis

- Within the federal government's \$6 trillion+ annual budget, there is significant funding available for the Town's priorities through multiple federal agency grant programs and Congressionally Directed Spending.

The \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act, \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and \$437 billion Inflation Reduction Act feature billions of dollars in new funding for local governments like the Town of New Paltz. This is in addition to the annual program grants already scheduled.

- On behalf of New Paltz, MM will pursue funding for your priority needs such as surface transportation, water and wastewater infrastructure, parks and recreation, workforce and economic development, public safety, law enforcement, and much more.

MM's Resource Inventory process invariably will identify additional fundable needs.

- New Paltz is USDA-rural. In the context of federal grants, your rurality is a strength. Merchant McIntyre has won the most grants for rural local governments with this eligibility.
- The timing of our discussion is essentially perfect. The new federal fiscal year began on October 1 and a flurry of federal grant competitions will be announced this winter and early next year.
- MM recently helped rural local governments win grant awards of \$17.2 million for roadway improvements and \$4.3 million to upgrade water/wastewater infrastructure.
- Understandably, the Town simply lacks a comprehensive federal grants strategy and the professional "boots on the ground" in D.C. to execute it. Humbly, that's MM's greatest strength. Our role is to serve as an extension of the Town's professional staff — your "multiplier force" to forecast, identify, help write, submit, mobilize Congressional support for, **win**, and comply with federal grants.

MM professionals have won every type of federal grant New Paltz is likely to seek.

- Merchant McIntyre professionals regularly meet with federal program officers at DOT, USDA, DOJ, DOL, FEMA, HRSA, and other federal agencies to gather invaluable intel about how to win grants from these departments. Specifically, we learn about the competitive preference priorities that program officers are using to score applications.

(In his famous book *The Art of War*, Sun Tzu wrote, “Infiltration is always more effective than assault.” Merchant McIntyre will infiltrate federal agencies in the best sense of the word to help win funding for New Paltz.)

- The essential keys to winning federal grants are to 1) have a crystal-clear understanding of what the program officers are looking for in an award-worthy application and 2) begin writing the application long before it’s publicly announced.
- The Congress has re-introduced Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) (formerly known as “line-item earmarks”). This legislatively-directed funding enables local governments like New Paltz to secure major dollars for projects not addressed by competitive grants.

In the FY23 appropriations cycle, MM has secured \$46 million for client projects. These include:

- \$2 million to support a water and sewer infrastructure project,
- \$1.9 million to construct an ADA accessible walkway,
- \$1.1 million for roadway improvements,
- \$750K for housing,
- \$750K to construct resilient infrastructure,
- \$700K for park improvements, and
- \$617K to help construct a fire station.

Why not New Paltz in the next appropriations cycle?

- We have strong working relationships with the New York Congressional delegation through our successful representation of Village of Kyrias Joel, D’Youville University, Alliance University, Westchester Medical Center, Garnet Health, The Doe Fund, Hebrew Academy for Special Children, and Mother Cabrini Foundation.
- Since the Congress has the "sole power of the federal purse," mobilizing Members to champion grant applications is an important step in the process — one that most local governments either overlook or cannot accomplish themselves. MM will write the letters of support and talking points so Members/staff simply need to sign the letters and pick up the phone to call the federal agency program officers.
- To provide you with a sense of the dollars available for New Paltz’s needs, here are selected examples of Congressionally Directed Spending and funding awards that Merchant McIntyre has helped win. **This should give you confidence:**

Infrastructure

- \$20 million to support water and wastewater improvements.
- \$17.2 million for roadway improvements in a key business corridor.
- \$14.1 million to construct a multimodal greenway.
- \$12 million for a roadway extension project.
- \$11.4 million for roadway improvements and to create a clearly delineated bicycle and pedestrian facilities and trails.
- \$6.1 million to extend a water line.
- \$4.3 million for water/wastewater infrastructure to increase capacity.
- \$2.7 million for water/wastewater infrastructure to generate economic development.
- \$1.4 million for highway safety improvements.

- \$1.35 million for streetscape improvements and to construct pedestrian walkways.
- \$1.3 million for water infrastructure improvements.
- \$900K to plan the construction of a downtown plaza and overpass.
- \$500K for wastewater infrastructure improvements.

Community Development

- \$1.8 million to support a new health sciences and paramedic training program.
- \$1.46 million to support the development of an industrial park.
- \$1.4 million to plan and implement local workforce development strategies that promote new, sustainable job opportunities.
- \$469K to purchase new distance learning equipment.
- \$363K for the development of a program to address domestic violence.
- \$100K to provide needed training and technical assistance to rural businesses.

Public Safety

- \$2 million in emergency funding for a flood control project.
- \$1.5 million to upgrade and consolidate emergency communications systems.
- \$700K for first responder technology and communications.
- \$446K to purchase law enforcement equipment.
- \$413K to fund the hiring of two new school resource officers.
- \$350K for a new fire engine.
- \$105K to improve wildfire prevention, response, and recovery.
- \$53K for 30 state-of-the-art body cameras and enact a training/use policy.

Community Health and Wellness

- \$1 million to expand substance abuse treatment services in a rural area.
- \$922K to purchase new telemedicine equipment.
- \$900K to improve access and quality of rural healthcare in an underserved area.
- \$150K to make park improvements and construct an ADA-accessible trail.
- \$150K for the development of a recreation center.
- \$100K to provide fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables to low-income residents.

Scope of Work

Merchant McIntyre would truly function as an extension of your professional staff, implementing the following scope of work to help the Town of New Paltz maximize federal support:

1. Develop Funding Strategies:

- Conduct an in-depth Resource Inventory to determine and document New Paltz's strengths and needs, and to get to know your programs, priorities, and people.
- Match New Paltz's strengths, strategic priorities, and funding needs with federal grant programs.
 - Assess the Town's internal capabilities and capacity to determine how best to leverage your strengths and address any gaps in critical areas including: staffing, technology, community needs, partnership development, and more.
 - MM will prepare a comprehensive Federal Funding Strategy featuring a detailed Federal Grants Grid and specific Action Plan so New Paltz's leadership can review and assess forecasted federal funding opportunities and evaluate MM's strategies to secure that funding.
- Identify New Paltz's priorities that are fundable through Congressionally Directed Spending.

2. Implement Funding Strategies to Win Federal Grants:

- Identify grant opportunities and assess both eligibility and competitiveness before grants are released to the public. (While New Paltz may technically be eligible for a given grant(s), it's MM's job to ensure that you're truly competitive before we invest your resources in applying.)
- Help establish and/or strengthen relationships with key agency staff to learn their criteria for award-worthy grant applications — long before the grants are announced.
- Utilize agency staff recommendations on best practices from current grantees and review winning applications for similar projects.
- Develop proposal themes and write and produce background materials that provide a compelling, persuasive presentation of New Paltz's priorities to potential federal funders.
- Merchant McIntyre will provide grant-writing support for the targets we've identified. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Collaborate with your professional staff ("content experts") to manage application development and write the actual grant proposals.
 - Deploy Merchant McIntyre subject matter experts to develop or improve program design and/or specific application components. Review individual grant-scoring criteria to ensure proper emphasis in the application.
 - Finalize grant proposals; provide multi-level reviews to ensure clarity, cohesiveness, and editorial input. Check budgets for cost-effectiveness, completeness, and accuracy.
- To help secure Congressionally Directed Spending, MM will:
 - Schedule substantive discussions with Members of Congress and their staff in D.C. and New York to highlight New Paltz's funding objectives.
 - Review the strategic priorities and earmark history for each Member to ensure alignment with New Paltz's priorities and potential requests.
 - Strategically target the federal funding accounts and agency programs that offer the best chance for success.
 - Develop project descriptions based on the requirements of each Member and Appropriations Committee staff.
 - Help secure compelling support letters from local partners, beneficiaries, and stakeholders.
- Ensure New Paltz's project(s) make the priority list of your Congressional champions.
- Merchant McIntyre will help drive New Paltz's funding requests through every step of the legislative process in the House and Senate — subcommittee, full committee, floor action, and conference committee — until it's signed into law by the President.
- Once the appropriations legislation is signed into law, MM will assist the Town in drawing down the funding expeditiously from the relevant federal agency.

Budget

We opened Merchant McIntyre Associates to assist local governments exactly like the Town of New Paltz. MM's typical minimum retainer for the scope of work described here is \$8,000/month for a period of one year. This retainer is all-inclusive — there is no additional fee for grant writing or grant compliance.

The Town will always have budget certainty when working with Merchant McIntyre; you will never be surprised by an invoice!

Since this would be a new initiative for New Paltz, and because we appreciate your budget constraints, we propose an initial 90-day “audition assessment.” The four deliverables during this period are:

1. Conduct a Resource Inventory to identify specific federal funding objectives and potential grant requests for New Paltz.
2. Prepare a comprehensive Federal Funding Strategy featuring a detailed Federal Grants Grid and specific Action Plan so you can assess the funding opportunities and evaluate MM’s strategies to secure that funding.
3. Arrange substantive Congressional and Executive Branch meetings with staff and federal program officers who have jurisdiction over the funding MM targets for New Paltz based on forecasted federal grants and the timing of the Town’s federal grant submissions.
4. Support the Town in all facets of the federal grant process, including planning, partnership development, grant writing, budget development, proposal submission, and administrative requirements.

Of course, the fifth “deliverable” is that you will get to evaluate Merchant McIntyre’s strategic thinking and added value.

If the Town’s leadership is pleased in every respect with Merchant McIntyre Associates during this initial 90-day engagement, you may then decide whether to retain MM for a period of one year.

Our objective is to deliver the highest possible ROI so Jean, Chris, the Town Board, and the entire New Paltz staff exchange high-fives and say, "Let's do that again!"

Conclusion

For all the reasons described in this document, Merchant McIntyre Associates would welcome the assignment to secure major federal support on a regular basis for the Town of New Paltz. Humbly, we want to serve you as a transformative partner.

Thank you for your serious consideration of this Federal Funding Action Plan.

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