



Adirondack Park Local Government Planning Fund

Establishes and sustains a Local Government Planning Grant Program administered by the Adirondack Park Agency

Assembly Bill No.: AXXX

Assembly Sponsors: XXXX

Senate Bill No.: S.3366

Senate Sponsors: *Carl Kruger, D-Brooklyn*

Purpose:

The purpose of this bill is to establish an Adirondack Park Agency (APA) administered grant program which supports local land use planning efforts. This bill would result in steady funding for Adirondack Park local government planning initiatives, further mutually beneficial working relationships between local governments and the APA and ensure sound land use planning based on Smart Growth principles.

Funding for the grant program would be sustained through application fees, settlement agreements and civil penalties collected by the APA.

Background:

Local governments within the Adirondack Park benefit from comprehensive plans, zoning laws and local subdivision review. These tasks can be burdensome for small local governments that have no professional staff and rely on support from volunteers. In the Adirondack Park, seventy percent of the town and village populations are less than 2,000 people, while fifty percent have populations below 1,000 people.

Early in its existence, the APA administered a grant program that assisted local governments with land use planning and related program administration. State funding for this program was eliminated in the 1990s. For many years there has been strong support from various stakeholders to re-establish a targeted program that addresses the unique challenges and opportunities faced by municipalities inside the Adirondack Park such as developing comprehensive plans and local land use programs.

Provisions:

This bill would establish and sustain the "Local Government Planning Grant Program" administered by the APA. The APA would provide grants to Adirondack Park local governments for eligible grant program activities including but not limited to:

- preparation or update of a local comprehensive plan as defined in the town or village law;
- preparation of a local open space plan;
- preparation of a local recreation plan;
- preparation of a local water, sewer or energy infrastructure plan;
- administration of an agency-approved local land use program;
- preparation of local zoning, subdivision, sanitary, storm water, flood mitigation, special purpose land use local law or regulation;
- planning for inter-municipality shared services;
- county-level or regional-level planning to address a common theme, such as affordable housing, energy conservation, smart growth, scenic by-ways corridor management, local access to public recreation, comprehensive economic development strategies, and infrastructure planning;
- planning for municipal participation in regional planning objectives;
- Watershed-based or water body based plans; and
- grants shall not exceed 75% of the eligible project costs. Local governments would contribute the remaining 25%.

Grant funds would carry over from year to year and provide essential support to Adirondack Park municipalities for land use planning and zoning administration.

The bill would also establish a stable and somewhat predictable funding source through nominal application fees, consistent with municipal practices for minor, major and variance applications filed with the APA. For example, the APA would collect fees of \$100 for minor projects such as a single family dwelling permit and fees of \$1,000 for subdivision applications on projects that exceed 50 or more lots. Funding support would also include settlement agreements and civil penalties collected as a result of APA enforcement actions.

Applications submitted by state agencies, local governments and applications related to aquatic and terrestrial invasive plant control would be exempt from the fee requirement.

Budget Implications:

This new program is expected to generate annual revenue of between \$75,000 and \$200,000 which would be used exclusively to fund local government planning initiatives. APA existing staff would absorb all new responsibilities for program administration and implementation. No additional staff or resources are required.

Contact:

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