

Application Questions

Use this document to review the application questions and to prepare your responses. This document **cannot** be used to submit your grant application. Only applications submitted through the online [Grants Management System](#) can be accepted.

Applications must be submitted electronically before 7:00 pm on Monday, October 2, 2017.

Application Summary

Applicant:

1. Applicant Municipality:
(or lead applicant if applying as a consortium)

Town of East Montpelier

2. What is your most recent town plan adoption date?

June 3, 2013

3. Please select any current state designation(s) in the municipality:
(Visit the [DHCD Planning Atlas](#) to check if your municipality has a state designated center.)

Village Center X

Downtown

Neighborhood Development Area

Growth Center

New Town Center

Confirmation:

4. Is the planning process in your municipality confirmed by your regional planning commission?

Yes X

No

a. If No:

Is your municipality in the process of being confirmed on or before the confirmation deadline (September 30, 2017)?

Yes

No

b. If No:

Is this application for a municipal plan that will be submitted to the regional planning commission for approval, which is necessary for confirmation?

Yes

No

- c. Has your municipality voted at an annual or special meeting to provide local funds for municipal and regional planning purposes?

Yes X (in town budget)

No

5. Is this a consortium project?

Yes

No X

a. If Yes:

Please identify the participating municipalities

(All participating municipalities must have a confirmed planning process by the confirmation due date, September 30, 2017, and must submit a resolution signed by their legislative body.)

Project Description

6. Please identify the project type:

Municipal Plan

Zoning and Subdivision Bylaw X

Planning for State Designated Area

Infrastructure or Capital Improvement Planning

Natural Resource Planning

Flood Resilience Planning

Other

a. If other, specify:

7. Project Title:

Name the project as **concisely** as possible.

The project title will be used in the grant agreement and program announcements if this grant is funded. (80 character limit)

Examples: Unified Bylaw Update, Village Revitalization Plan, Sewer Line Mapping

Land Use & Development Regulations Update

8. Project Description:

Provide a very brief summary of what the project will accomplish and produce.

This description of main project outcomes will be used in MPG program marketing materials, if this grant is funded. See the list of [FY17 Funded Projects](#) for examples. (250 character limit)

Example: The town will hire a consultant to evaluate constraints and opportunities for infill development and conduct a public outreach program to engage residents in the village planning process.

Example: Marble City will obtain expert assistance to conduct a public involvement program and develop a draft form-based regulations to replace the current zoning and more effectively implement our goals in the designated downtown.

The Planning Commission will hire expert assistance (consultant or RPC) to help update the town's zoning bylaws. Draft amendments will be developed to implement the Village Master Plan and update zoning in the rest of the town.

9. What are the primary issues your community is trying to address?

Describe both the immediate concerns and the larger, enduring issues that the community wishes to resolve through the grant project. *(4,000 character limit)*

The Town of East Montpelier was awarded a FY2016 municipal planning grant to develop a master plan for the East Montpelier designated village center and the surrounding village area. The village master plan outlined specific actions needed to achieve the vision that was identified through the planning process.

The master plan proposed new zoning districts intended to revitalize the village center, increase density and promote compact growth in the village. Smaller lot sizes and reduced setbacks were proposed throughout the village. The proposed new village zoning would promote substantial new residential development in the village, including a planned Habitat for Humanity multi-family development that is not supported by current zoning. This MPG project will develop the zoning language to implement new village zoning.

The master plan also identified that the current parking standards, based on 1970's auto-centric norms, are inappropriate for the vision of a denser, pedestrian-friendly village. The project will develop more suitable parking standards.

The village is not sewered, hindering dense development. The master plan proposes increased planned unit development density bonuses to provide incentives for new development with shared infrastructure. This project will update the town's planned unit and planned residential development to reflect both the new village districts and the extra density bonuses proposed for the village.

The master plan notes that infrastructure improvements including water and wastewater are key to village growth and revitalization. At the same time, greater density is needed to make infrastructure investments economical. The proposed village zoning seeks to allow greater density in the village, within the current infrastructure constraints, so as to make it more economical for the town to consider village infrastructure investments in the future.

In the course of developing the village master plan, it became apparent that zoning throughout the remainder of the town does not support a development pattern that focuses density and development in the village. The town's zoning bylaws reflect 1970's suburban style development characterized by large lots and excessive setbacks. Additionally, there is a disconnect between the location and purposes of districts and how they have developed over the decades. For example, areas in the commercial district are conserved farmland, while areas of the agriculture and forest conservation district have been developed into large lot, rural residential development that fragments forest and agricultural land. This runs counter to the state's historic settlement pattern of compact village centers separated by rural countryside. This project will review and update the purposes, uses, lot sizes, setbacks and boundaries of the zoning districts outside the village to ensure that they are consistent with their intended purposes, promote open space and conservation in appropriate locations, and are consistent with the goal of promoting development in the village.

- 10. How will the proposed project address the identified issues?** Include specific actions proposed to address the concerns. Describe both what the project will produce (outputs) and what the project will accomplish and how it will make a difference (outcomes). *(4,000 character limit)*

The Town of East Montpelier is proposing a comprehensive update to the zoning bylaws to occur in two phases.

The first phase will develop new zoning districts and regulations for the area included in the East Montpelier Village Master Plan (FY2016 MPG). This includes purpose, permitted and conditional uses, dimensional standards and supplemental standards for each district. Review and amendments to the PUD/PRD and parking requirements are also required to implement the village master plan and encourage village-scale development. These zoning updates are key to implementing the goals and actions identified in the village master plan, and to enable compact and walkable village development that promotes the state's planning goals.

The second phase of this project will review and develop amendments to the zoning bylaws for the rest of the town. Although other aspects of the town's zoning have been updated, the current zoning districts have not been reviewed or amended since 1974. District purposes will be reviewed to determine whether they still make sense in the context of the Town Plan and how the town has developed, and to ensure that they do not discourage new development in East Montpelier Village. New districts may be proposed based on the Town Plan. District boundaries will be evaluated based on existing development and conservation, proposed growth areas, agricultural lands, unfragmented forest areas, and the updated flood hazard areas (FY2014 MPG). Dimensional standards, such as lot size and setbacks, will be reviewed and updated. Development review standards will also be reviewed and updated. The output will be proposed zoning amendments. Town adoption of these amendments will better protect agricultural and forest lands, reduce rural residential and commercial sprawl, and promote new housing and small business development in the village.

These two phases are critical to do in tandem, as any changes proposed to the zoning bylaws that increase development opportunities within the village will have impacts throughout the municipality. Additionally, regulatory updates to parking, dimensional standards, or PUD density bonuses may affect the entire town. Finally, zoning updates to both the village and rest of town are needed to promote compact village growth and maintain the rural character of the surrounding countryside, in conformance with state planning goals.

- 11. How will the proposed project engage the public and community partners?** Describe citizen participation activities and outreach intended to educate and involve the public in planning as well as any coordination and cooperation with relevant local and/or regional organizations. *(4,000 character limit)*

The project will use a variety of approaches to reach out and engage the public:

- **The Planning Commission will recruit 3-5 residents to participate on the steering committee for the duration of the project. This additional support and participation from the community will help create additional connections and bring a fresh perspective from a non-planning commission point of view.**
- **Informational sessions and discussions on specific topics will be used to provide the steering committee and public sufficient background to understand the issues or options and have a basis for decision-making. (E.g., what works well/doesn't work well with existing zoning; farming issues and opportunities; important agricultural lands; important forest lands; economic development and zoning) Depending on the topic, the contractor may make a presentation, or town staff, boards, committees, individuals or organizations may be asked to participate in discussions with the steering committee. This approach was effective during the development of the village master plan.**
- **A public workshop will be used to engage residents and businesses in review of town zoning districts. Small groups will provide input on district purposes, boundaries, uses and lot sizes. The contractor and steering committee will use the workshop results in developing amendments to the zoning districts.**
- **Draft zoning amendments will be presented at an open house event. The open house format provides greater opportunity for individuals to ask questions, provide input and learn about the next steps, and is effective in obtaining feedback from people who won't speak up in a formal meeting or hearing. An open house format, scheduled in conjunction with the elementary school open house, was very effective in engaging parents and other members of the public during development of the East Montpelier Village Master Plan. We will seek a similar opportunity to use a non-traditional venue to engage the community where they gather. Public feedback from the open house will be used to refine the draft zoning amendments.**
- **A town meeting display will be used to inform residents about the project and its progress.**
- **A public meeting will be used to present the draft zoning amendments and solicit public comments. A public meeting is useful for reaching and getting input from people who won't engage until a complete product is available for review.**
- **The Planning Commission and Selectboard will each hold the required public hearings on the proposed zoning amendments.**

Most project activities will be scheduled as part of regularly warned Planning Commission meetings. Events requiring more time, such as the public workshop and open house, may be held separately with their own warning. Presentations, discussion topics, activities and events will be publicized on Front Porch Forum. A bi-monthly town newsletter, the East Montpelier Signpost, will also be used to report on zoning update progress and to announce

specific events, such as the public workshop, open house and public meeting. Depending on the timing, tax bill stuffers may be used to announce special outreach events.

- a. Approximately how many people do you aim to engage in the project, including local board members and people who complete surveys?

Local board and committee members: about 45, including Planning Commission

Workshop participants: 15-25

Open house attendees: 30-100

Public meeting attendees: 10-30

Public hearing attendees: 10-25

The Planning Commission believes that these numbers are both realistic and a substantial level of engagement for a town of 2,610 (ACS 2011-2015)

- b. List the organizations you will coordinate with including other municipal boards and commissions:

Selectboard

Development Review Board

Village Committee

Forest Committee

Recreation Board

Conservation Fund Advisory Committee

Planning Commissions in neighboring towns

Vermont Land Trust

Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (if not the contractor)

Vermont Natural Resources Council

Central Vermont Economic Development Corp.

12. How will the project further the goals of your municipal plan?

Explain how the project implements the ideas and actions set forth within the municipal plan. Insert municipal plan excerpts that demonstrate the linkage between the project and the plan. (For consortium projects provide municipal plan linkage information, including excerpts, for all member towns.) If extra space is needed, please upload your response to this question as an attachment, but do not attach the municipal plan itself. For municipal plan updates, describe specific policies or aspects of the current or latest plan that need revision in order to address the issue(s) identified above.

The 2013 East Montpelier Town Plan speaks specifically to revitalization of the East Montpelier Village and to the establishment of zoning that would help establish a compact and walkable development pattern. The Designated Village Center is currently discussed as the core non-residential development hub of the community. Specific town plan excerpts are noted below.

The 2013 Town Plan identifies zoning district issues/opportunities, including:

- **Create an East Montpelier Village Zone**

- **Protect agricultural Land from poorly planned development**
- **Discourage strip development in Zone A (Commercial) and Zone C (Residential and Commercial)**
- **Explore the potential for other growth areas such as Gallison Hill**
- **Protect unfragmented forest lands**

Land Use Goals:

- **Ensure that land use patterns retain the values expressed by citizens including rural development patterns, protection of agricultural land, protection of open space, and the enhancement of East Montpelier's villages.**
- **Protect valuable agricultural land.**
- **New development should be focused within East Montpelier's villages and identified growth areas.**
- **Encourage compact development that reflects historic development patterns and protects open space.**

Actions:

- **Create a village zone for East Montpelier Village.**
- **Improve zoning regulations to protect agricultural land from poorly planned development through techniques such as planned unit development, conservation subdivisions and reducing roadway widths.**
- **Prevent strip development by specifying Zones A (Commercial) and C (Residential and Commercial) how strip development is to be prevented. Review the land use regulations to prevent strip development in other zoning districts.**
- **Create a village zone for North Montpelier Village.**
- **Review the Industrial Zone to ensure that conflicts will not interfere with future commercial and industrial development within the zone.**
- **Explore the potential for other growth areas such as Gallison Hill.**
- **Strongly encourage developers to do Planned Unit Developments that efficiently use the land, reflect historic settlement patterns, and protect open space.**
- **The Forestry Committee should identify unfragmented forest land and provide recommendations to the Planning Commission as to how these areas should be protected.**

13. How does your project further the statewide planning goals?

Discuss whether and how your project furthers any of the MPG priorities for meeting the statewide planning goals. If none of the priorities apply to your project, please indicate "not applicable." (4,000 character limit)

MPG FY17 Priorities for Meeting the Statewide Planning Goals:

- a. Municipal Plan** updates for:
- Promoting revitalization of historic centers and compact, walkable development including housing
 - Addressing inconsistencies with statewide planning goals or incompatibility with the Regional Plan, identified by the regional planning commission review of the municipal plan. (Must include documentation in the application from the regional planning commission that summarizes the inconsistencies to be addressed – ask your

regional planning commission to provide a copy of the latest consultation report to include with your application.)

Applicants for municipal plan projects are encouraged to use the process described in the [Planning Manual for Vermont Municipalities](#).

MPG priority points are not available for municipal plan updates or amendments focused on obtaining substantial deference in the Section 248 siting process for energy generation as other assistance is available. See [Department of Public Service guidance](#) and contact your [Regional Planning Commission](#).

b. Bylaw updates for:

- Correcting clear conflicts with the Municipal Plan
- Increasing housing options in walkable places
- Promoting compact, walkable development

Priority bylaw projects will include a strong public outreach component.

c. Special Projects for Designated Areas – downtowns, village centers, new town centers, neighborhood development areas and growth centers – including the following:

- Plans, studies and bylaws to improve the physical and economic environment such as downtown master plans, revitalization plans and form based regulations.
- Infrastructure studies and capital improvement planning in support of designated areas (see page 11 for special requirements).
- Applications or addressing pre-requisites for a new designated neighborhood development area, new town center, or growth center – please contact DHCD if you are considering an application to obtain one of these designations. The designation process must be initiated before a grant will be issued for this purpose.

The East Montpelier Village Master Plan (FY2016 MPG) was developed to strengthen and support the designated village center and surrounding village areas. Currently, the designated village center is almost completely built out based on existing zoning. The village master plan proposes new zoning that will create some new development/redevelopment opportunities in the designated village center. However, the small size of the designated village center and relatively small existing lot sizes limits future growth. The Village Master Plan envisions a village area surrounding the designated village center. The proposed zoning will create new business and mixed use opportunities adjacent to the village center and considerable new residential opportunities in areas surrounding the designated village center. Promoting a larger local population in walking distance will help support and create demand for businesses in the designated village center and help implement the master plan vision of a vibrant, compact and walkable village with increased housing options.

Reviewing and updating the zoning in the rest of the town will: better align future development with zoning district purposes; better protect important forest, farm and open spaces; reduce rural residential and commercial sprawl; and encourage new growth to occur in the village and identified growth areas rather than in the town's rural areas.

- 14. How does your project relate to and support an existing state designated downtown, village center, neighborhood development area, new town center or growth center?**

If no state designated areas exist in the municipality, indicate “not applicable.”
(2,000 character limit)

Our designated village center is located in East Montpelier Village. Through our FY2016 MPG, we did extensive planning and public outreach to develop a village master plan to promote new residential and commercial development in the designated village center and the surrounding village areas. Now we need to implement the village master plan through new zoning for the village planning areas.

Updated zoning in the rest of the town will help focus growth in East Montpelier Village by reducing the ease of development outside the village, deterring rural residential and commercial sprawl, and helping protect important agricultural, forest and open space lands.

15. If you received an MPG last year, discuss any relationship to this application and your capacity to simultaneously complete both grant projects. (2,000 character limit)

Not applicable.

Municipal Resolution

Please print and complete the [Municipal Resolution](#). If this is a consortium application, each participating municipality must complete a resolution designating the same Municipal/Authorizing Official and Administrator. See [MPG Roles](#) for more information about the responsibilities and permissions of the grant roles.

Please note that only the names of individuals who have [registered for an account](#) in the online grants management system will appear in the dropdown menus in the online system. Please contact DHCD staff at annina.seiler@vermont.gov or 802.828.1948 for assistance.

Municipal/Authorizing Official: <dropdown menu>
Title:

Alternate Municipal/Authorizing Official: <dropdown menu>
Title:

Grant Administrator: <dropdown menu>
Title

Upload Completed Municipal Resolution or Mail to DHCD.