

**2.1 Project Sponsor:** It is proposed that the project sponsor of record should be the North Montpelier Community Trust ("NMCT" herein, not yet established). In order to achieve compliance surrounding the application deadline, The Collective Well is happy to serve as project fiscal sponsor in the event NMCT is not in place at the time of the application submission.

**2.2 Project Title:80**

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) North Montpelier Village Master Revitalization Plan*

**2.3 Project Subtitle:250**

Provide a very brief summary of what the project will accomplish and produce. This description will be used in MPG program marketing materials if this grant is funded. See the list of FY24 Funded Projects for examples.

*(There will be opportunities to provide more detail later in the application)*

*To develop a comprehensive plan to develop affordable, low impact, energy-conserving housing, including necessary infrastructure; and considers community & economic development and food security, all of which can support the resilient future of North Montpelier Village.*

*Or:*

*Developing a plan for North Montpelier's resilient future: affordable homes, sustainable infrastructure, food security and a thriving local economy — built by community, for community, to outlast crisis and inspire the world.*

**2.4 Project Description: 2500**

Provide an overall summary of the following:

- 1. Issue,**
- 2. Approach to solving the problem,**
- 3. Project Deliverables, and**
- 4. Intended long-term outcomes.**

North Montpelier is at an intersection of challenges, pressing need for affordable housing options that support current and new residents, while supporting ecological resilience. Local infrastructure is aged and increasingly ill-equipped to support growth and withstand the impacts of climate change. Remote work, changing markets, and increasing interest in small-scale local enterprises require new economic models. Infrastructure needs to cover basic needs while positioning the village for future success. Without adequate planning and infrastructure investment, challenges of climate-related hazards could exacerbate existing inequities, slow economic progress, and strain existing resources. These concerns make a path forward balancing affordable housing, economic vitality, and environmental sustainability imperative.

This project centers on inclusive and collaborative planning that integrates the voices of the local community, technical experts, and regional partners. This plan will lay the foundation for a sustainable and resilient future by focusing on three primary pillars: affordable housing, community driven economic development, and infrastructure upgrades.

The deliverables for this project will be designed to provide both immediate planning guidance and long-term strategy for North Montpelier. A Comprehensive Community Plan with a detailed roadmap outlining specific strategies for affordable housing development, economic growth, and infrastructure improvements to include specific zoning recommendations, economic development strategies, and proposed infrastructure investments to enhance resilience will be the high-level deliverable.

This project will position North Montpelier and East Montpelier for long-term resilience and prosperity by creating a flexible, adaptable community plan that responds to both current and future needs. The intended long-term outcomes include: Increased Affordable Housing, Resilient Infrastructure, Economic Growth and Job Creation, Community Empowerment and Engagement, and Environmental Sustainability.

Ultimately, this project aims to create a lasting, adaptable framework for the growth of North Montpelier, one that is sustainable, inclusive, and ready to meet the challenges of a changing world. Through strategic planning, community collaboration, and a focus on resilience, this effort will set the stage for a bright and thriving future.

## **2.5 Project Location:250**

Describe the geographic area(s) the project will address.

(Briefly describe the project's area of focus, such as: entire town, watershed, planning area, zoning district(s), a specific site, etc. For projects not defined by municipal or state designation boundaries, ATTACH any available images in the online Attachments Form to illustrate the project location, such as a map or photo that helps reviewers become familiar with the project's location and conditions.)

North Montpelier, a Village Center in the town of East Montpelier is located at the junction of VT routes 14 and 214 and is 7 miles east-northeast of Montpelier. The Village Center designation was approved by Vermont ACCD in 2019.

#### 4.1 Project Issue & Urgency: 2500

What timely community issue(s), problem(s), challenge(s), or obstacle(s) will the project address?

North Montpelier is no exception to Vermont's acute housing crisis. The village has lost residential vibrancy due to a lack of affordable and diverse housing options. Limited wastewater infrastructure constrains development, making it impossible to build new or repurpose existing structures leading to dwindling population, aging demographic, and economic stagnation. This project addresses these issues by planning for infrastructure upgrades, most critically wastewater solutions. Prioritizing affordable, intergenerational housing, with shared resources ensures that North Montpelier is not only a place to live but a place to thrive. Housing is foundational for economic, civic, and long-term resilience of the village. Investing in infrastructure, housing, and mixed-use community spaces, this project aims to reactivate the local economy. Plans include a farm stand and café, shared office and business incubator space, and expanded opportunities for local entrepreneurs to launch ventures in food production, craft industries, and sustainable trades. The project envisions an economic ecosystem that is place-based, drawing on North Montpelier's natural and cultural assets while aligning with contemporary economic drivers such as remote work, entrepreneurship, and regenerative agriculture. The project creates strategic framework to integrate recreational opportunities with community well-being and economic vitality. Formalizing public access points, improving trail connectivity, and developing amenities such as bike and EV charging stations, the project will enhance quality of life while attracting visitors and new residents. North Montpelier is a food desert, lacking a local grocery store or fresh food retail options. This project addresses food insecurity by integrating community-supported agriculture (CSA), edible landscaping, and greenhouse into the revitalization plan. Prioritization of climate resilience through flood-adaptive planning into all aspects of redevelopment, includes green infrastructure, flood-resistant building retrofits, and nature-based solutions such as riparian restoration, aiming to mitigate flood risks while enhancing ecological health. Not just about fixing problems, this project is about reimagining what a 21<sup>st</sup> century rural Vermont village can be. Through housing, economic revitalization, environmental stewardship, and community-driven planning, North Montpelier can emerge as a beacon of possibility for rural renewal statewide.

#### 4.2 Funding Need: 2000

What other funding sources, if any, were considered, and why is the MPG program the best source to fund this project?

*The Municipal Planning Grant (MPG) program is the ideal funding source to develop this foundational plan. Its flexibility, targeted purpose, and ability to leverage larger funding streams align with current need. Unlike many other grants that require shovel-ready projects, the MPG supports early-stage planning efforts that are essential prerequisites for implementation funding. Without this critical planning phase, North Montpelier is in a cycle of opportunity without execution, the necessary groundwork to secure capital investments is missing. Funding that was explored: **Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) Grants** prioritize housing, economic development, and infrastructure projects but require a clearly defined plan and pre-development work. **Northern Borders Regional Commission (NBRC) Grants** focus on economic and infrastructure development and require detailed project planning, cost estimates, and feasibility assessment, none of which can be completed without a planning process. **Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB) Grants** provide critical funding for affordable housing and land conservation, but applicants must demonstrate project feasibility, community impact, and infrastructure readiness. **USDA Rural Development Programs** offer funding for community facilities, water/wastewater systems, and business development but are highly competitive and demand comprehensive pre-planning efforts to justify funding allocations. **Federal Climate Resilience and Infrastructure Grants** could support climate adaptation measures given North Montpelier's floodplain challenges, but most require extensive pre-development assessments, cost-benefit analyses, and strategic planning.*

*Each of these funding opportunities holds promise for North Montpelier's long-term revitalization but can't be accessed without a Master Plan that synthesizes community priorities, infrastructure needs, and economic strategies into an actionable, fundable framework. The MPG uniquely fills this gap.*

#### **4.3(a) Municipal Plan Project Readiness: 2000**

If the application is for a municipal plan adoption or amendment project, how will the project address the issues described earlier and any recommendations made by the RPC to bring the municipal plan into compliance with statutory requirements?

MP Project Readiness NA Not a Municipal Plan project

Not a Municipal Plan project

**Not a municipal plan project**

#### **4.3(b) Municipal Plan Implementation Project Readiness: 2000**

If the application is for a project that implements the municipal plan, how is the

proposed project identified as an important implementation action in the adopted municipal plan? MP Implementation Read NA Not an implementation project  
Not an implementation project

*This project is not a municipal plan adoption or amendment initiative. However, it is deeply aligned with the goals and recommendations of East Montpelier's municipal plan, serving as a critical next step in translating broad planning objectives into actionable strategies for North Montpelier's revitalization and it builds upon key themes outlined in the town's long-term vision, including Economic Development & Village Revitalization, Housing Affordability & Smart Growth, Climate Resilience & Flood Mitigation. It is not an implementation project, but it serves as an essential bridge between the vision of the East Montpelier Town Plan and the projects needed to realize that vision so is a critical enabler of implementation. It ensures that North Montpelier contributes to East Montpelier's long-term planning goals.*

*The municipal plan identifies several key challenges; housing, economic, and infrastructure gaps, and flood hazards, but without a targeted planning effort specific to North Montpelier, these challenges remain unaddressed at the village scale. This project will fill that gap through a Master Plan that integrating planning priorities with specific, actionable projects tailored to North Montpelier's unique context. This planning effort will identify funding pathways and implementation strategies, moving municipal plan goals beyond broad aspirations into tangible projects. By securing MPG support for this initiative, North Montpelier will be equipped to:*

***Translate municipal plan goals into site-specific projects** rather than waiting for ad-hoc development, providing the necessary planning to proactively guide investment. **Leverage municipal plan alignment** to secure additional funding demonstrating consistency with town priorities to strengthen applications for state and federal grants.*

***Support future implementation projects** by identifying infrastructure needs, zoning updates, and economic strategies, making it easier for the town to take decisive action.*

#### **4.4 Other Background 2000**

Are there any additional community efforts or activities leading up to this application that would provide extra context for this project? (Optional)

*There are several community initiatives laying the groundwork for this application. One is a grant application to purchase and renovate the centerpiece of the town, the Sibley House, into eight affordable housing units, as well as community spaces and café with attached greenhouse and gardens. This Phoenix Project is intended as a major revitalization initiative with outcomes that will improve community economic opportunities, climate resilience, and affordable housing. Other initiatives include: Resource Mapping to identify potential areas for agricultural expansion and*

improved food processing infrastructure as part of residents' commitment to sustainability and local climate resilience; collaborating with the Natural Resources Conservation Service on the feasibility of a community greenhouse and gardens; trail network expansion to enhance walkability, economic activity, outdoor recreation, and connectivity; North Montpelier Community Trust has been created to manage shared resources for the public benefit; and an intergenerational placemaking blog is a shared digital archive. Additionally, the residents of North Montpelier have a deep connection to, and seasonal traditions around, the Singing Bridge, a town landmark, that magnify local pride and connection to public spaces.

#### 4.5 Project Overlap 1500

If a municipality received an MPG last year - or the project is a part of a larger or phased project, explain how the project relates and the capacity to complete the proposed project. Project Overlap NA N/A (single project with no overlap)

N/A (single project with no overlap)

#### 4.6 Project Management 1500

How will the project and consultant be managed and who will make decisions about the project and final products? Please identify one or two individuals in the community who will lead the project (for example: the Planning Commission Chair).

Management will be led by Jennifer Devine, East Montpelier's Town Administrator, and Celina Barton, member of the East Montpelier Planning Commission. Both bring experience in municipal planning, community engagement, and strategic project oversight. Jennifer and Celina will manage consultant engagement, facilitate stakeholder meetings, and ensure that milestones are met. Their leadership underscores the town's commitment to a well-organized, community-driven approach of planning efforts that transform into actionable results.

Jennifer Devine understands East Montpelier's municipal structure, regulatory landscape, and strategic priorities. Her leadership ensures that this project aligns with town objectives, funding mechanisms, and compliance requirements. Jennifer will oversee administrative processes, facilitate communications with agencies, and keep the project on schedule and within scope.

Celina Barton was raised in North Montpelier and recently returned to the historic farm she grew-up on. As the strategic planner and visionary for the new Goddard campus, a member of the East Montpelier Planning Commission, and a real estate broker Celina brings knowledge of land-use planning, community development, and infrastructure resilience. Her expertise in housing strategy, zoning, and economic revitalization ensures deliverables align with long-term planning goals. Celina's involvement in previous community-based initiatives positions her as a strong liaison between project stakeholders, consultants, and residents.

### 5.1 Public Outreach: 2000

What participation methods will the project use to engage the participation of the broader public, especially commonly under-served and under-represented populations in the community?

*Participation methods for this project will utilize current and new pathways. One is the recently revived village potluck which provides a forum for outreach, inclusivity, collective visioning, and creates space for voices that might have difficulty being heard in formal meetings. Community events, like the holiday lighting of the Singing Bridge, also offer opportunity for the broader public to come together for information sharing. As this project moves forward, we will expand public outreach efforts to ensure that commonly under-served and under-represented populations have a seat at the table. This will include targeted outreach to lower-income residents, elders, and young professionals, as well as multi-channel engagement strategies, such as community surveys, social media storytelling, and neighborhood listening sessions. Front Porch Forum, municipal and community websites and newsletters, municipal social media accounts, libraries, schools, local papers and community leaders are all outreach avenues that may be utilized. Any scope of work for a consultant will include a thoughtful and thorough community engagement process that includes these existing community forums and reaches out to community members that may not be as engaged. By embedding public participation into the very fabric of North Montpelier's revitalization, we are not just planning for the community, we are planning with the community.*

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### 5.2 Project Partnership & Support: 2000

In addition to the Selectboard and Planning Commission's resolution of support, please explain and provide evidence of organizational partnership and community support for the project. (Applicants may **attach** up to five pages as a single document in the Application Attachments Form, including: letters of support, meeting minutes, or other documents showing community support for the project.)

*The foundation of this project lies not only in the resolute backing of the Selectboard and Planning Commission, but also in the deep support we have cultivated across a broad spectrum of community stakeholders. From grassroots organizations to local businesses, the collaboration on this initiative is a testament to shared values of sustainability, innovation, and communal engagement.*

*The project's potential to positively transform our community has generated considerable interest, as evidenced by a range of partnership commitments. Our coalition includes the following key organizations and individuals:*

**Community Trust and Advocacy Groups:** Local advocacy groups, such as Collective Well, have expressed their enthusiastic support. Letters of support, included in the application packet, outline how this initiative complements their long-term objectives of building local economic resilience.

**Local Businesses:** Small businesses across the region have also pledged their support. We have received written endorsements from several key players, who understand the positive ripple effect this project will have on the local economy, from increased foot traffic to expanded service offerings.

**Community Members and Stakeholder Meetings:** At the heart of this project are the voices of local residents. Attendee feedback, recorded in meeting minutes and included in the application packet, highlights a collective commitment to creating meaningful change for the entire community. This project is the product of years of collaboration, planning, and engagement. The support we have garnered, as reflected in the attached letters, meeting minutes, and partnership agreements, underscores the collective investment in this project's success. Together, we are poised to create a space that serves not just the immediate needs of the community, but also builds a lasting legacy for generations to come.

### 6.1 Project Outcomes & Goals: 2000

Beyond the project itself, what long-term outcomes would demonstrate the success of the project and further the statewide planning goals?

This project addresses immediate community needs and establishes long-term, sustainable impact that aligns with Vermont's strategic statewide planning goals. Integrating principles of climate resilience, housing development, and municipal improvement, we are setting the stage for long-term success.

Enhanced Climate & Flood Resilience align with Statewide Priority 2. A goal of this project is to leverage potential for housing development. This will provide affordable housing options while ensuring environmental responsibility through smart planning and community-focused design, aligning with Statewide Priority 3. This project provides an opportunity for municipalities to collaborate in building sustainable infrastructure, aligning with Statewide Priority 4. Designed to emphasize housing, land conservation, and climate adaptation and working with state regulations to advance environmental protection and resilience, this project exceeds the standards set forth by these legislative acts. It establishes a precedent for how communities can navigate state priorities to create positive, lasting change, directly contributing to Statewide Priority 1. Our physical improvement plans involve detailed assessments of water systems, the groundwork for potential expansion and future development. Any future application for a "step-up" designation will be prepared with the right infrastructure and vision to meet community needs and state guidelines, aligning with Statewide Priority 5. This project emphasizes creating welcoming, accessible community for people of all ages. Inspired by Vermont's Age Strong Roadmap, we are committed to creating spaces and infrastructure that enhance the well-being of seniors, families, and young people,

aligning with Statewide Priority 7. This project is sure to be a replicable model for other communities. The lessons learned, will provide insight for municipalities looking to implement similar initiatives, aligning with Statewide Priority 8.

Which of the following statewide priorities does this project address. (select all that apply)

Statewide Priority 1 Projects focused on the implementation of the Act 47 of 2023 and Act 181 of 2024

Statewide Priority 2 Projects related to climate resilience and flood recovery

Statewide Priority 3 Projects related to housing development

Statewide Priority 4 Capital programs and plans for municipal improvements

Statewide Priority 5 Physical improvement plans for a designated area, which may include pre engineering water/wastewater visioning

Pre-requisite planning to prepare for a center or center 'step-up' designation application

Statewide Priority 7 Projects that support communities for all ages and help implement

Age Strong Vermont: A Roadmap for an Age-friendly State

Statewide Priority 8 Innovative and statewide projects that serve as a replicable model for other communities

Statewide Priority 9 Not Applicable (N/A) - Project is a local priority

### 6.3 Priority Project Explanation: 2000

Explain how the project furthers the selected statewide priority(s).

*This project meets local needs while also to serving as a beacon for statewide progress. It directly advances several of Vermont's key statewide priorities, each of which is embedded into the project's*

*goals. Housing and infrastructure development in tandem with environmental protections and climate resilience planning are at the heart of this project and Statewide Goals 1-3. Statewide Goal 5 - By engaging in pre-engineering water and wastewater visioning, we are ensuring that the physical improvements we make are designed to serve both current and future needs. The integrated nature of the planning process allows us to build with adaptability and resilience in mind, positioning this project as a model for communities in the state seeking to apply for a center or "step-up" designation. Statewide Goal 7 - By focusing on accessible public spaces, multi-generational engagement, and sustainable design, this initiative embodies the principles outlined in Age Strong Vermont: A Roadmap for an Age-Friendly State. Whether it's through accessible pathways for seniors or active spaces that engage youth, this project ensures that our community will be a place where people of all life stages can engage, thrive, and contribute. Statewide Goal 8 - From its flood mitigation strategies to its community-driven design process, this initiative is intended to serve as a replicable model for other municipalities. By addressing these priorities, the project not only meets*

local needs but also contributes to a broader vision of sustainability, resilience, and community health. It positions Vermont as a leader in climate adaptation and sustainable development while ensuring that its communities are places where people can live, grow, and thrive across generations. This project is a catalyst for change, transforming both the landscape and the future of the state.

#### 6.4 Designated Areas:

Which of the following state designations are held by the municipality, select all that apply? Designations 1 Village Center

Designations 2 Downtown

Designations 3 New Town Center

Designations 4 Neighborhood Development Area

Designations 5 Growth Center

Designations 6 N/A

N/A

#### 6.5 Designated Area Projects:2000

If the project relates to any of the designated area(s) selected above, please explain.

*Integrating the benefits of the Village Center designation with thoughtful planning models how designated areas can be leveraged to enhance both the economic and social vibrancy in historic villages by;*

***Incentivizing Private Investment:*** An advantage of the Village Center designation is the financial incentives it provides. Investment in both the preservation of historic structures and the creation of new, sustainable developments is encouraged by tax credits, grants, and low-interest loans.

***Encouraging Sustainable Development:*** Village Center framework is designed to foster development that is both context-sensitive and sustainable meaning new projects are encouraged to integrate green technologies, energy-efficient design, and stormwater management systems.

***Attracting Tourism and Visitors:*** By revitalizing infrastructure, supporting local businesses, and creating spaces for community events, the village's appeal as a destination for visitors interested in Vermont's rich history and natural beauty is enhanced. ***Building a Vibrant Community:*** A thriving economy dovetails with a connected community. Village Centers create opportunities for public spaces, parks, and shared amenities inviting social interaction, community events, and cultural engagement.

***Supporting Small Businesses:*** Village Centers benefit from policies that prioritize locally owned, small-scale businesses. By creating spaces for entrepreneurs and offering incentives for the rehabilitation of storefronts, the project will help bolster the entrepreneurship in the village.

***Enhancing Infrastructure and Accessibility:*** Improved, accessible infrastructure enhances both

*economic and social functionality, making it a more attractive place to live, work, and visit.*

**Strengthening Local Partnerships:** *Fostering a spirit of collaboration, the project will ensure that the revitalization of North Montpelier is driven by the collective will of its residents, businesses, and visitors.*

### **7.1 Project History and Performance:2000**

Please list any planning projects, or grants, from the past-5-years, with key actions identified and implemented. (will inform ongoing status of projects beyond grant closeout)

*East Montpelier, including North Montpelier Village has several recent projects and grants. These projects have focused on enhancing infrastructure, promoting sustainable development, and preserving historic character.*

*In 2018, East Montpelier received a MPG to develop a Master Plan for East Montpelier Village Center. This plan aimed to create a vision for the Village's future, including land use, transportation, and community facilities. The project was a collaborative effort involving the Planning Commission and the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission.*

*Following the completion of the Master Plan for East Montpelier Village, East Montpelier received MPG funding in 2019 to update its Land Use & Development Regulations. Focus was on encouraging compact development within the village and conserving agricultural and forest lands in surrounding areas. This update aimed to align regulations with the goals outlined in the Master Plan, promoting sustainable growth and preserving the Village's rural character.*

*In 2019, the historic village of North Montpelier was designated as a Village Center by ACCD. This designation provides access to state incentives for revitalization, including tax credits and grants for property improvements. The designation supports the Village's economic vitality by encouraging investment in historic buildings and infrastructure.*

*In 2020, East Montpelier village also received the Village Center designation. This designation offers similar benefits as those available to North Montpelier, including financial incentives for property owners and developers. It aims to stimulate economic development and preserve the village's historic character.*

*In 2021, East Montpelier received an MPG to develop a Master Plan for East Montpelier Village Center. The plan focuses on enhancing the village's infrastructure, promoting sustainable development, and preserving its historic character.*