

Proposed New Scope Notes

Orchard Valley Intergenerational Housing & Resilience Hub

Town of East Montpelier – Steering Committee Draft

Purpose

The Town of East Montpelier will use the \$100,000 CDBG-DR Planning Grant to establish a clear, implementable pathway for resilient, affordable intergenerational housing with a focus on caring for our elders and attracting young people back to Vermont connected to the Orchard Valley Waldorf School (OVWS) campus, while evaluating opportunities to locate a portion of the housing units on nearby or abutting properties – a resilient agricultural-hood/village within East Montpelier.

This approach reflects two guiding principles:

1. **Orchard Valley as the central resilience, education, and service hub**
Orchard Valley's established agricultural, craft, shared values, and supportive community programming make it a natural foundation for expanded community resilience. Building on these existing strengths, the campus will continue to support community gathering, training, food systems, a local/circular economy, and climate-resilient infrastructure while serving residents both on- and off-site.
2. **Distributed, flood-resilient housing development**
Planning will identify the safest and most feasible locations for affordable homes across the OVWS campus and neighboring or partner parcels, rather than assuming all housing must be built onsite. This distributed approach advances long-term flood resilience while strengthening connections between Orchard Valley and the surrounding community.

Strategic Focus for the \$100,000 Planning Phase

Because the award is reduced from the original \$300,000 request, this phase prioritizes core planning work that unlocks implementation funding, while deferring detailed infrastructure and program design to later grants.

Planning will answer three essential questions:

1. Where can flood-resilient, affordable housing be most safely and effectively located?
Including evaluation of the OVWS campus alongside nearby or cooperating partner parcels to support a distributed housing approach.
2. What development scale, affordability mix, and financing strategy are realistically achievable?
Considering regulatory requirements, infrastructure capacity, and alignment with funding sources such as VHCB, LIHTC, and USDA Rural Development.
3. How can the housing strategy reinforce Orchard Valley's existing role as a community-based center for learning, resilience, and local agricultural economy? Ensuring new development

strengthens—rather than duplicates—the campus’s established educational, agricultural, and community-support functions.

Revised Planning Components & Budget – Total: \$100,000

Phase 1 – Site & Neighborhood Feasibility Analysis – \$40,000

Evaluate both the 55-acre OVWS campus and potential partner/abutting parcels to determine the most resilient and feasible housing locations.

Key tasks:

- Floodplain and climate-risk mapping across campus and nearby candidate sites
- Identification of high-ground, buildable areas on multiple parcels
- Preliminary yield analysis from housing units (distributed scenario)
- Infrastructure and access review (roads, utilities, emergency access)
- High-level geotechnical and environmental constraints screening
- Comparative analysis:
 - On-campus vs. distributed neighborhood siting

Deliverable:

Resilient housing siting framework and preferred development scenario.

Phase 2 – Housing Feasibility & Financial Modeling – \$40,000

Define the most viable path to develop affordable units, whether clustered, distributed, or hybrid.

Key tasks:

- Housing needs analysis focused on LMI households
 - Survey of flood-displaced households and current housing instability
 - Senior housing demand assessment (willingness to relocate, affordability)
 - Teacher/workforce housing needs at OVWS and region
 - Quantification of LMI households cost-burdened or in substandard housing
 - Absorption analysis: Can the market support the new units over what timeframe?
 - Income segmentation to inform AMI targeting
- Development scenarios:
 - On-campus cluster
 - Distributed neighborhood infill
 - Hybrid hub-and-spoke/satellite model
- Financial pro-formas aligned with:
 - VHCB
 - LIHTC
 - USDA Rural Development
- Affordability targets and income mix
- Order-of-magnitude development cost estimates
- Funding roadmap and sequencing strategy

Deliverable: Implementation-ready housing concept and funding pathway.

Phase 3 – Environmental Review & Regulatory Pathway – \$10,000

Advance the CDBG-DR Environmental Review for the preferred housing scenario(s) and OVWS hub functions.

Key tasks:

- HUD environmental review documentation
- Zoning, subdivision, and permitting pathway analysis (including implications of off-site housing locations)
- Section 106 historic preservation coordination
- Identification of regulatory risks and mitigation strategies

Deliverable: Clear approval pathway enabling future construction funding.

Phase 4 – Partnership Engagement, Community Input & Reporting – \$10,000

Support the distributed housing strategy through structured engagement with:

- Abutting and nearby property owners
- Seniors, LMI residents, and flood-impacted households
- OVWS stakeholders and municipal partners

Key tasks:

- Facilitated conversations with potential host or partner parcels
- Community workshops on hub-and-neighborhood resilience vision
- Documentation of partnership interest and constraints
- Final planning report and implementation roadmap

Deliverable: Adoptable community-supported plan positioning Orchard Valley as:

- Resilience hub
- Housing catalyst across the surrounding landscape



Elements Deferred to Future Funding Phases

To stay within the \$100,000 award, detailed design of the following will be pursued through subsequent grants or implementation funding:

- District energy and heating systems – the Village of North Montpelier is working with Nathan Mascolino from VEIC and hopes to get Wilson Engineering to do a plan for a district heating system, which could possibly serve both the downtown village area and clustered housing on the hill around OVWS. Molly Willard from the Department of Parks and Recs is standing by to assist the town of East Montpelier in applying for a

Community Wood Grant – \$1M to help home owners transfer from fossil fuel to advanced wood heat.

- Agricultural and food-system infrastructure
- Commercial kitchen / café
- Advanced wastewater or ecological treatment systems
- Workforce training facilities
- Agritourism or market programming

Addressing the Remaining Funding Gap

The Town will pursue a phased, leveraged funding strategy, aligning:

- CDBG-DR → Core housing siting, feasibility, and approvals
- Downstreet and partners → Complementary planning and predevelopment
- Future state/federal/philanthropic sources → Infrastructure and hub programming

This structure ensures the \$100,000 planning phase directly unlocks implementable housing, even as the broader Orchard Valley vision continues to grow.

Outcome of the Planning Grant

By completion, the Town and Steering Committee will have:

- A defensible, flood-resilient siting strategy for affordable homes
- A clear role for Orchard Valley as the community resilience hub
- Environmental and regulatory readiness for funding applications
- A phased financing roadmap toward construction

Questions for the OVWS Board

CDBG-DR Resilient Housing Planning – Governance & Direction

1. Housing Vision & Scale

- How many total housing units does the Board envision for the property at full build-out?
- What mix of unit types (family, senior, supportive, faculty – ownership vs. rental) should guide planning assumptions?
- What level of affordability should define the project's long-term mission?

2. Project Priorities

- Among resilience, affordability, speed of development, and long-term community services, which priorities should lead early decision-making?
- Are there any program elements the Board considers essential from the outset?

3. Community Context & Neighbor Relations

- What level of clarity about unit count and site concept is needed to begin constructive conversations with neighbors?
- How should the Board balance transparency with flexibility while planning is still underway?

4. Partnership & Capacity

- What role does the Board envision for development partners such as Downstreet or others?
- What internal governance or staffing capacity will be needed over the next 12–24 months?

5. Funding Strategy & Risk Tolerance

- What level of financial risk is the Board willing to assume during predevelopment?
- Should the strategy prioritize phased growth or a single comprehensive development approach?

6. Timeline & Commitment

- Does the Board remain committed to pursuing shovel-ready housing within 2–3 years?

- What decision points would signal the need to pause, pivot, or accelerate?

7. Long-Term Stewardship

- What ownership or stewardship model best aligns with OVWS values (nonprofit ownership, community trust, cooperative, etc.)?
- How should resilience, intergenerational living, and community services shape the final vision?

How many units should we explore building on the OVWS campus?

How do you all see the educational portion of the project laying out?

How do you see intergenerational housing especially the addition of some affordable senior housing integrate with OVWS's educational offerings?

Steering Committee Questions for Technical Experts

Steering Committee Questions for Technical Experts ***CDBG-DR Resilient Housing Planning – OVWS Community***

1. Overall Scope & Strategy

- Given the reduction from \$300,000 to \$100,000, does the proposed foundation-planning approach adequately position the project for future implementation funding?
- What critical planning elements must be completed now to ensure the project becomes shovel-ready affordable housing within 2–3 years?
- Are there risks that deferring infrastructure, food systems, or energy planning could delay or jeopardize housing development later?
- How should the success of this \$100k planning phase be measured and documented for HUD and future funders?
- Does the funding breakdown seem reasonable for the phase plan?

2. Site Analysis & Master Planning

- Does the proposed 55-acre site analysis scope provide sufficient information to determine buildable, flood-resilient areas?
- What level of geotechnical and infrastructure assessment is minimally necessary to support funding applications such as VHCB or LIHTC?
- Are there site access, utility capacity, or environmental constraints that could materially affect feasibility?
- Should any climate resilience or flood-mitigation design standards be incorporated at the planning stage?

3. Housing Feasibility & Financial Modeling

- Is the assumption of 25?? housing units appropriate given site conditions, infrastructure, and local housing demand?
- What income targeting and affordability mix best aligns with CDBG-DR LMI requirements and regional housing needs?
- What development scenarios are most financially viable using VHCB, LIHTC, USDA RD, or other subsidies?

- What are the largest cost drivers or financial risks, and how can they be mitigated during planning?
- What information must be produced now to make the project competitive for 2026–2027 funding rounds?

4. Environmental Review & Regulatory Pathway

- What are the key risks in completing the CDBG-DR Environmental Review, and how early should they be addressed?
- Are there potential wetlands, historic preservation, or permitting barriers that could delay development?
- What zoning or subdivision actions might the Town need to initiate?
- How can the planning work ensure full HUD compliance while minimizing duplication in later phases?

5. Deferred Systems & Future Funding

- Which deferred elements (district energy, wastewater innovation, agriculture, commercial kitchen, workforce training) are most critical to long-term viability?
- What grant programs or technical assistance are realistically available in the next 12–24 months?
- Should any preliminary feasibility or siting for these systems still occur during this phase to avoid re-work?
- How can planning outputs be structured to unlock DOE, USDA, EPA, or philanthropic funding?

6. Budget, Match, and “Other Resources”

- What is the strongest strategy to address the \$200k Other Resources requirement:
 - Expanded Downstreet commitment
 - Phased parallel funding
 - Municipal contribution
 - Reduced total scope
- What documentation will HUD require to verify committed resources?

- Are there alternative public or philanthropic sources the Steering Committee should pursue immediately?

7. Community Engagement & Equity

- How should engagement prioritize flood-displaced households, seniors, and LMI residents?
- What level of outreach is sufficient for HUD compliance within the limited \$5k budget?
- How can planning ensure the project reflects intergenerational, resilient, and community-serving housing goals?

8. Timeline & March 16, 2026 Deadline

- What minimum deliverables must be completed to satisfy CDBG-DR award conditions?
- Are there components that could justify a deadline extension, if needed?
- What procurement or contracting steps must occur immediately to stay on schedule?

To OVWS Board:

- How many units are you expecting to be on the property?
 - This will allow us to discuss with the neighbors

Steering Committee Duties & Expectations

CDBG-DR Resilient Housing Planning Grant – OVWS Community

1. Core Purpose

The Steering Committee provides strategic guidance, community accountability, and decision support during the planning phase so the project becomes:

- HUD-compliant
- Financially feasible
- Climate-resilient
- Community-supported
- Ready for implementation funding within ~2–3 years

The committee does not manage day-to-day consultant work; it ensures the planning stays aligned with mission, schedule, and funding requirements.

2. Governance & Decision Role

Steering Committee members are expected to:

- Advise on project vision, scale, and affordability goals
- Review and recommend key planning decisions to the OVWS Board
- Help resolve policy, community, or partnership questions
- Ensure alignment with HUD CDBG-DR rules, LMI benefit, and resilience goals
- Support risk awareness and realistic phasing

The OVWS Board retains final authority on major decisions.

3. Planning Oversight Responsibilities

Members will:

Review & Guide Technical Work

- Provide feedback on site analysis, housing feasibility, and environmental review
- Ensure planning outputs are sufficient for VHCB, LIHTC, USDA, or other funding
- Confirm the project remains implementable, not just conceptual

Monitor Budget, Match & Timeline

- Track progress toward the March 16, 2026 CDBG-DR deadline
- Review use of planning funds and match strategy
- Flag risks that could delay future construction funding

4. Community & Equity Role

The Steering Committee helps ensure the project reflects:

- Flood-impacted households and LMI residents
- Seniors and intergenerational housing needs
- Transparent and respectful neighbor engagement
- Long-term resilience and community benefit

Members may assist with:

- Outreach events
- Listening sessions
- Sharing accurate project information

5. Partnership & Funding Support

The committee will:

- Help cultivate relationships with development partners, funders, and agencies
- Advise on phasing and financing strategy
- Identify grant or technical assistance opportunities
- Strengthen credibility for future capital funding

6. Participation Expectations

Time Commitment

- **Regular meetings (typically monthly during planning)**
- **Advance review of materials**
- **Occasional participation in community engagement or funder discussions**

Conduct

Members are expected to:

- **Act in the best interest of the community and OVWS mission**
- **Engage respectfully and collaboratively**
- **Avoid micromanaging staff or consultants**
- **Support clear, timely decision-making**

7. Key Deliverables the Committee Helps Achieve

By the end of the planning grant, the Steering Committee should help deliver:

- **Feasible housing concept and unit range**
- **Site and environmental readiness**
- **Clear development pathway and partners**
- **Competitive funding package for 2026–2027**
- **Documented community support**
- **HUD-compliant planning record**

New CDBG-DR Scope

I'll help you reimagine this project scope to fit the \$100,000 CDBG-DR award (down from the \$300,000 requested) while maintaining focus on resilient revitalization.

Let me analyze the key challenges and create a strategic framework for you.

Key Issues to Address:

1. **Funding Gap:** You requested \$300k, received \$100k, and need an additional \$200k in "Other Resources" beyond the existing \$260k Downstreet commitment
2. **Award Condition Deadline:** March 16, 2026 to meet conditions or request extension
3. **Core Mission:** Maintain focus on resilient, affordable housing planning post-2023 floods

Recommended Scaled-Back Approach:

Strategic Focus: Foundation Planning Phase

Rather than trying to do comprehensive feasibility for all components, focus the \$100k on creating the essential planning foundation that unlocks future implementation funding.

Revised Budget Allocation (\$100k total)

Phase 1: Site Analysis & Master Planning (\$45,000)

- Comprehensive site assessment of OVWS 55-acre campus
- Flood zone verification and high-ground development areas
- Preliminary site layout for 25 housing units
- Infrastructure capacity analysis (existing utilities, access points)
- Geotechnical assessment for buildable areas

Phase 2: Housing Feasibility & Financial Modeling (\$35,000)

- Housing needs assessment focused on flood-displaced LMI households
- Financial pro-forma for 25-unit development
- Affordability analysis and income targeting
- Funding strategy roadmap (VHCB, LIHTC, USDA RD coordination)
- Preliminary architectural concepts for intergenerational housing
- Cost estimation for housing development

Phase 3: Environmental Review & Regulatory Planning (\$15,000)

- Complete CDBG-DR Environmental Review process
- Zoning and permitting pathway analysis
- Section 106 Historic Preservation coordination
- Regulatory compliance framework

Phase 4: Community Engagement & Reporting (\$5,000) (Laura Bailey from VCRD?)

- Stakeholder workshops (seniors, OVWS community)
- Municipal presentation materials
- Final planning report and implementation roadmap

What Gets Deferred (for future planning grants or implementation)

Move to "Other Resources" or Future Phases:

- Detailed district heating/cooling system design → Seek DOE technical assistance or Richard King Mellon Foundation funds (Talk to Molly Willard, Marianne and Andy Perchlik?)
- Agricultural/food systems integration → USDA Rural Development planning grants
- Commercial kitchen/cafe detailed design → EDA or USDA planning support
- Detailed wastewater innovation systems → Seek EPA or state environmental planning funds
- Workforce training program development → Department of Labor planning resources
- Agritourism Destination → insurance for cafe and Farmer's + Craft Market

Addressing the \$200k Other Resources Gap

You have several options:

Option 1: Downstreet Fund Restructuring

- Confirm if the existing \$260k Downstreet commitment can be reallocated
- Request formal amendment showing \$460k total commitment (\$260k existing + \$200k additional)

Option 2: Phase and Leverage

- Use the \$100k CDBG-DR for core housing/site planning
- Show the \$260k Downstreet funds committed to infrastructure/energy/food systems planning (parallel track)
- Explain to CDBG-DR staff that total planning scope is phased across funding sources

Option 3: Municipal Contribution

- Town commits \$200k in municipal funds or establishes a revolving loan fund
- Could come from: ARPA funds, bonding capacity, capital reserves

Option 4: Adjust Total Project Scope

- Reduce total planning budget from ???
- Provide detailed narrative explaining focused scope on housing feasibility and site planning
- Defer integrated systems planning to implementation phase

Recommended Action Plan

Immediate (by January 2026):

1. Meet with Downstreet to confirm fund commitment structure
2. Engage with 2-3 qualified planning firms to refine scope and costs
3. Draft revised budget showing either additional \$200k commitment OR reduced scope justification

By March 16, 2026 Deadline:

1. Submit all required award condition documentation
2. Provide clear explanation of budget adjustment approach
3. Show evidence of Other Resources commitment OR scope modification

Narrative to CDBG-DR Steering Cmte: "Given the reduced award amount, the Town is focusing Phase 1 planning on the essential foundation: comprehensive site analysis, housing feasibility, and financial modeling for 25 affordable units on flood-resilient land. This targeted approach will produce shovel-ready housing development plans while deferring integrated infrastructure systems planning to subsequent grants (DOE, USDA, EPA) once housing viability is established. This phased strategy maximizes CDBG-DR impact on core disaster recovery housing needs."

AI input

Revised CDBG-DR Planning Scope

Resilient Housing & Revitalization Planning – Orchard Valley Region
Total CDBG-DR Planning Budget: \$100,000

Purpose and Context

Questions for the OVWS Board

CDBG-DR Resilient Housing Planning – Governance & Direction

1. Housing Vision & Scale

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- What mix of unit types (family, senior, supportive, faculty – ownership vs. rental) should guide planning assumptions?
- What level of affordability should define the project's long-term mission?

2. Project Priorities

- Among resilience, affordability, speed of development, and long-term community services, which priorities should lead early decision-making?
- Are there any program elements the Board considers essential from the outset?

3. Community Context & Neighbor Relations

- What level of clarity about unit count and site concept is needed to begin constructive conversations with neighbors?
- How should the Board balance transparency with flexibility while planning is still underway?

4. Partnership & Capacity

- What role does the Board envision for development partners such as Downstreet or others?
- What internal governance or staffing capacity will be needed over the next 12–24 months?

5. Funding Strategy & Risk Tolerance

- What level of financial risk is the Board willing to assume during predevelopment?
- Should the strategy prioritize phased growth or a single comprehensive development approach?

6. Timeline & Commitment

- Does the Board remain committed to pursuing shovel-ready housing within 2–3 years?
- What decision points would signal the need to pause, pivot, or accelerate?

7. Long-Term Stewardship

- What ownership or stewardship model best aligns with OVWS values (nonprofit ownership, community trust, cooperative, etc.)?
- How should resilience, intergenerational living, and community services shape the final vision?

How many units should we explore building on the OVWS campus?

How do you all see the educational portion of the project laying out?

How do you see intergenerational housing especially the addition of some affordable senior housing integrate with OVWS's educational offerings?

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xt and land availability.

Award condition deadline: March 16, 2026.

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Strategic Approach

Foundation Planning with Distributed Housing Analysis

The \$100,000 planning effort will:

- Establish **site feasibility on the Orchard Valley campus**
- Evaluate **adjacent and nearby parcels** for potential housing locations
- Build **landowner partnerships and development pathways**
- Produce **financially viable, shovel-ready housing concepts**
- Position the project for **VHCB, LIHTC, USDA RD, and other implementation funding**

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Revised Planning Phases and Budget

Phase 1 – Multi-Parcel Site Analysis & Master Planning

\$45,000

- Comprehensive assessment of the **Orchard Valley 55-acre campus**
- **Flood-resilient buildable area verification**
- Identification and preliminary screening of **abutting or nearby parcels**
- High-level **site layout scenarios** for up to **25 total housing units across one or more sites**
- Infrastructure and access capacity review (roads, utilities, services)
- Targeted **geotechnical and environmental feasibility review** for priority locations

Outcome:

A clear understanding of **where housing can realistically and safely be built** across the Orchard Valley area.

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Phase 2 – Housing Feasibility, Partnerships & Financial Modeling

\$35,000

- Housing needs assessment focused on **LMI and flood-impacted households**
- Evaluation of **development scenarios across multiple parcels**
- Preliminary **landowner partnership structures** (acquisition, ground lease, joint development, conservation subdivision, etc.)
- Financial pro-formas for **distributed or clustered housing options**
- Affordability strategy and income targeting
- Funding roadmap aligned with **VHCB, LIHTC, USDA RD, and related sources**
- Concept-level architectural/site planning for **intergenerational, resilient housing**
- Order-of-magnitude development cost estimates

Outcome:

A **financially and legally feasible pathway** to deliver approximately **25 affordable homes**, whether on one site or several.

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Phase 3 – Environmental Review & Regulatory Pathway

\$15,000

- Completion of the **CDBG-DR Environmental Review process** for priority sites
- Zoning, subdivision, and permitting pathway analysis for **multi-parcel development**
- **Section 106 historic preservation coordination**, as applicable
- Identification of **regulatory risks or approvals** affecting site selection

Outcome:

Regulatory clarity sufficient to support **near-term funding applications and site control decisions**.

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Phase 4 – Community & Landowner Engagement, Reporting

\$5,000

- Structured outreach to:
 - **Abutting landowners and potential partners**
 - Orchard Valley residents and stakeholders
 - Seniors, LMI households, and flood-impacted residents
- Public communication and municipal presentations
- Final **Resilient Housing Implementation Roadmap**

Outcome:

Community-supported direction and **documented partnerships or next-step agreements**.

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Elements Deferred to Future Funding

The reduced CDBG-DR award requires deferring detailed planning for:

- District energy or heating systems → **DOE or philanthropic funding**
- Agricultural/food systems integration → **USDA Rural Development**
- Commercial kitchen/café design → **EDA or USDA**
- Advanced wastewater innovation → **EPA or state programs**
- Workforce training programs → **U.S. Department of Labor**
- Agritourism and market infrastructure → **future implementation funding**

These elements remain part of the **long-term Orchard Valley vision** but are **not required to establish housing feasibility**.

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Addressing the “Other Resources” Requirement

To resolve the remaining planning resource gap, the Town may:

1. **Restructure or expand Downstreet’s commitment**
2. **Phase planning across funding sources** (housing via CDBG-DR; infrastructure via parallel grants)
3. **Provide municipal match or revolving funds**
4. **Reduce total planning scope to align with confirmed resources**

A final approach must be documented **before March 16, 2026**.

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Expected Deliverable

This planning effort will produce:

- **Feasible locations for ~25 resilient affordable homes**
 - **Landowner partnership pathways**
 - **Financially viable development scenarios**
 - **Regulatory clearance for priority sites**
 - A clear roadmap to **implementation funding and construction**
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Core Narrative for HUD

With a reduced CDBG-DR award, the Town is focusing planning resources on the essential foundation needed to deliver resilient affordable housing following the 2023 floods.

The revised scope evaluates both the Orchard Valley campus and nearby partner parcels to identify the safest, most feasible locations for approximately 25 homes.

This distributed, partnership-based approach maximizes disaster-recovery impact, strengthens long-term affordability, and positions the project for near-term implementation funding.