

Application for the FY 2022 Municipal Planning Grant Program
Jennifer Murray, Director, Planning & Zoning

Grant funds requested: \$22,000 Town Match: \$2,000 Total Project: \$24,000

Summary: This Municipal Grant application proposes to perform a targeted bike-ped plan focused primarily on existing and future neighborhoods in the Downtown and NDA areas. It will collect input to create maps and lists of future sidewalk and path connections, safety concerns, and needed bike lanes. The Plan will explore 4-5 projects in greater detail, providing conceptual drawings and alternatives suitable for pursuing implementation funding. Due to funding constraints (the max. award for this program is \$22,000 and such a plan costs \$50,000-60,000) this bike-ped plan will need to be expanded into a Town-wide Transportation Plan that takes a closer look at the rest of the transportation network, including vehicle and intersection safety, service and recommended improvements.

Need: Over the past few months, I met with the Infrastructure Committee and Planning Commission to discuss the advantages of performing a Town-wide Transportation and Bike-Ped Plan and received encouraging responses from both groups. We have seen an uptick since COVID in requests for sidewalk, bike lane, trail, and intersection safety improvements. The public process for preparing a Bike-Ped Plan will allow us to collect public input and document that input along with a comprehensive inventory and list of priority projects to support the capital planning process. The cost of a Town-wide Transportation and Bike-Ped Plan ranges from \$50,000 to 60,000. This exceeds the maximum award from a Municipal Planning Grant (\$22,000 plus \$2,000 match = \$24,000). However, it could be done as a phased project over two years applying for MPG funding in consecutive years or finding other funding sources. In that scenario, a bike-ped component of the Transportation Plan would be completed now and additional components of the Transportation Plan added as future phases of funding become available.

A second Town priority is the desire to advance affordable housing projects, which would be incentivized under proposed new zoning changes and a new state-designated NDA area. We have performed some very basic master planning to visualize the development that could occur on vacant parcels. One way the Town can support future development is to identify, scope and collect input related to the bike- and pedestrian connections that may be needed to connect new development to existing growth areas (ex. Bushey's Corner). In many cases, developers will need to help bear the cost of building this supporting infrastructure but a Bike-Ped Plan identifying these needs in advance will provide substantiation for these requests when the time comes.

The Municipal Planning Grant program is a competitive grant program. Bonus points are awarded for projects that occur in Designated Downtown Areas, and for physical master planning for designated areas (such as the proposed NDA area). The scope of work as proposed should allow us to collect points in both categories.

MPG Grants need to be completed within 18 months. This project would likely occur late Summer/Fall 2022 with completion in early 2023.