



MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA

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Technical Assistance Program

Project Concept

Lead Municipality: Manchester-by-the-Sea

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Project Description and Context: Downtown Strategic Plan

The Town of Manchester-by-the-Sea is seeking Technical Assistance to conduct a series of inter-related evaluations of the Town's downtown village area.

The Town's primary objectives are 1) to build consensus for the future of Manchester's downtown and 2) to update existing zoning regulations and district boundaries to help achieve the agreed-on future.

Manchester is in a new era of pro-active planning to address a number of challenges including lack of housing diversity and affordability, outdated and failing infrastructure and facilities, unbalanced land uses and the impacts of climate change. State and Federal agencies through grant funding and programs have been critical partners in the Town's work as it strives to support local, regional, state and federal goals.

Proposed key tasks for the Strategic Plan include, but may not be limited to, the following.

- Develop and lead a community engagement process to develop a clear vision of the village of the future with considerations of options for incremental growth in the downtown.
- Inventory, map and assess existing land uses in the downtown, including residential, commercial (by type), parking, municipal and other uses and recommend strategies to change the mix as desired.
- Identify, assess and recommend re-use options for potential redevelopment sites.
- Review and assess the downtown's vulnerability to climate change including rising sea levels and prioritize mitigation strategies in alignment with desired future conditions.
- Assess how the harbor can serve as a stronger economic engine for the community.
- Review and assess zoning regulations and the General District boundaries and identify strategies to support commercial, residential and mixed-use development, including identifying an area for "by right" multi-family housing as required of MBTA Communities.

Developing a Strategic Plan for downtown Manchester will provide the Town with the information needed to foster incremental economic and residential growth with an understanding of how these uses can be supported by parking, be developed in a scale and style appropriate to community character and goals, can contribute to the Town's housing diversity, improve the Town's tax base, and be part of a resilient and sustainable town center.

Project Need and Alignment with Local, Regional and State Goals:

The Downtown Strategic Plan is an important step in the implementation the Towns' 2019 Master Plan and 2021 Housing Production Plan.

Master Plan

- ED – 2: Revise Zoning in the General District to permit more village-scaled commercial and residential opportunities Downtown in a manner sympathetic to existing character.
- H – 1: Modify zoning to encourage housing of the size, style, and prices appropriate for downsizing households, elders, young families, singles, and couples (including as part of downtown development).

Housing Production Plan

- 8.2.1 Pursue 40R/40S Smart Growth Zoning
- 8.2.3 Modify Multi-family Housing Requirements to Encourage More Housing Diversity Within Design Guidelines
- 8.3.1 Pursue Opportunities for Mixed-use and Transit-oriented Development

We believe that creating a Downtown Strategic Plan through a robust community process will also help advance key State and Regional goals by identifying and building support for zoning changes that will allow new economic development and housing opportunities as well as enhance resiliency in the face of climate change. By right multi-family housing and strengthened support for mixed use zoning bylaws, are thought to be reasonable outcomes of the study.

Project Deliverables(s) and Outcomes:

The project deliverables would include:

A Community Engagement Plan, Outreach Support and Summaries

A Strategic Plan that includes:

- Land Use Inventory, Evaluation and Recommendations using maps, graphics and text.
- Assessment of the Downtown's vulnerability to rising sea level, flooding and storms with prioritized mitigation strategies to strengthen resiliency.
- Study of redevelopment options using maps, graphics and text to illustrate and compare options.
- Zoning assessment with recommended changes for regulations and boundaries, including draft Zoning Regulations and District Map.

Community Engagement:

Community Engagement and Downtown Vision - The Consultant Team will be asked to develop and lead a robust and interactive community engagement plan. The Plan should outline objectives, strategies and success criteria for each stage and element of the project. Engagement interactions

should to the extent practical result in quantifiable input. The process will help the community to articulate a shared Vision for Downtown Manchester-by-the-Sea.

Town Staff and project steering committee members will provide assistance as needed including identifying stakeholders, event opportunities, correspondence and other tasks.

Project Timeline:

A nine-to-twelve-month timeline is expected to be sufficient for the study. The Town will make every effort to schedule meetings and events, to review deliverables, and make decisions in a timely fashion to assure an efficient process.

Municipal Commitment:

The Town will support the Downtown Strategic Plan process with staff and volunteer hours as needed throughout the project. Sue Brown, Town Planner will be the principal point of contact and project manager and will be available as needed to assist with or provide coordination and communication, meet with project team members and provide preliminary review of all materials. The Town will appoint a Steering Committee and will take the lead in coordinating and promoting Community Outreach.

The Town will also provide a funding match of \$5,000, anticipated to be around a 10% match.

Signature: _____



Gregory T. Federspiel, Town Administrator

