



# TOWN OF CHESTER

## **CHESTER PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA** **February 7, 2022, 6:30 PM**

**The Town Hall is now able to have a combination in-person and Zoom meeting. The link for this Zoom meeting is on the home page of Chester's website, [chestervt.gov](http://chestervt.gov) as the Planning Commission meeting.**

1. Review minutes from the January 3<sup>rd</sup> and January 10th, 2022 meetings.
2. Citizen comments.
3. Review proposed Village Green Zoning District given input from the 1/10/2022 meeting with the DRB.
4. Set date for Village Green Zoning District bylaw amendment public hearing.
5. Discuss draft 2022 Project List and accompanying documentation of Housing Study Municipal Planning Grant.

## Draft 2022 Project List for Chester Planning Commission

Complete Village Green Zoning district changes and shepherd through the adoption process

Make changes to the administrative processes in the adopted bylaws for these issues:

- Craft permanent solution for legacy non-conforming uses that reflects the market realities and history of Chester.
- Expand and clarify exemptions in Section 4.3 using Article 1 of the proposed bylaws as a source.
- Establish difference between major and minor subdivisions and make a separate, simpler process for minor subdivisions
- Establish an optional non-hearing sketch plan review process with the DRB for a proposed subdivision
- Adjust the definition of Accessory Dwelling unit to conform with ACCD suggested standards

Shepherd the administrative process changes to the bylaws through the adoption process

Gather information about village districts and infrastructure

- Superimpose municipal water and sewer service on zoning district maps. Meet with Jeff Holden to discuss current and future needs
- Conduct housing study, including meetings with realtors, Windham Housing Trust and Regional Planning, funded through the Municipal Planning Grant
- Walk Chester village streets to note zoning district boundaries, the as-built environment and possible locations for multi-household dwellings

We may prepare an update to the Town Plan Housing Chapter. We may set aside formally amending the Town Plan depending on our workload and the Selectboard's workload.

Having gathered information, choose the order in which revisions to zoning districts will be done. Grouping types of districts together, such as Village, Residential, or Business and Industry may be helpful when adopting bylaw changes.

Once the legislative session is over, and Housing study information is gathered, review the Short Term Rental situation in Chester, consider goals Chester has that may not be met by the state statute and make any bylaw changes needed to support those goals.

Address the zoning district changes in the order decided by the Planning Commission, making changes as needed for density, parking requirements, dimensional standards and uses.

We can save the matching funds the town must contribute for the Municipal Planning Grant if we can complete the requirements of the grant by February 2024. I can see quite a celebration when we make that goal.

# Bylaw Modernization Grant Application | Fiscal Year 2022

## Vermont Department of Housing & Community Development

Application deadline: November 15, 2021 at 6 p.m. Refer to the [Program Description](#) for full details.  
E-mail complete application forms to [jennifer.lavoie@vermont.gov](mailto:jennifer.lavoie@vermont.gov).

### GENERAL INFORMATION

#### Single Municipality Application

Name of municipality Town of Chester

#### Multi-Town Application

Name of lead municipality \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of other applicant municipalities  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### Regional Planning Commission (RPC) Agent Status *(check one)*

- RPC **is not** serving as agent for the application  
 RPC **is** serving as agent for the application & RPC staff is listed as the primary contact below.

#### Primary Contact for Application *(this includes single and multi-town applications)*

Name Julie Hance

Organization Town of Chester

Complete mailing address P.O. Box 370, Chester, VT 05143

Email Julie.hance@chestervt.gov

Phone 802-875-2173

#### Financial Summary *(refer to the [Program Description](#) for maximum grant amounts)*

Grant Funding Requested \$ 16,500.00

+ Minimum Applicant Match *(10% of grant funds & eligible for forgiveness)* \$ 5,400.00

+ Any Additional Match *(not eligible for forgiveness)* \_\_\_\_\_

= Total Project Cost: \$21,900.00

#### Municipal Signer *(Person who has the authority to sign a grant agreement on behalf of the lead municipality if the application is funded)*

Name Julie S. Hance

Title Town Manager

Email Address julie.hance@chestervt.gov

Phone Number 802-875-2173

## Project Title

Chester UDB Modernization Project

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## Project Description & Summary

The purpose of this project is to update Chester's Unified Development Bylaws to implement the Town Plan and Village Center Master Plan, with a particular focus on modernizing the document to better address housing and further village revitalization goals.

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## ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION

Does the project meet the eligibility criteria, eligible activities, and mapping requirements in the [Program Description](#)?

Yes

Do the applicant municipalities in this application all have an adopted municipal plan and planning process confirmed by the RPC under Chapter 117 of Title 24?

Yes

## RESPONSES TO COMPETITIVE CRITERIA

*Please keep responses brief and legible for grant scorers by using the space provided. Do not reduce font size.*

### Community Need (25 points)

*Describe the community issues, problems, challenges, obstacles the project will address; how updates to the bylaws will help achieve state, regional, and local housing goals; and why the project is urgent.*

The Planning Commission has been reviewing bylaw changes for some time. However, there is a realization that an effort is needed to educate the community about housing and other community development needs. The document needs to be evaluated and modified to ensure the district densities and dimensional standards are consistent with existing conditions, streamline permitting conditions for housing and desirable economic activity in the villages, and address parking and other existing standards that may pose unnecessary restrictions. Efforts will also include evaluating whether the bylaws adequately encourage a vibrant pedestrian-oriented village center surrounded by a rural countryside, with adequate provisions for rural low-density residential uses, working landscape activities, and natural resource protections.

**Project Approach & Budget (25 points)**

Complete the table below with the project's work plan and budget. Competitive approaches will demonstrate that the project is realistic for a 24-month (maximum) period, be effectively sequenced, be cost effective and include public outreach tasks. Sample work plans and budgets are available online, [here](#).

**Itemized Work Plan & Budget**

| Task Description       | Quantity<br><i>hours/items</i> | Material Cost<br><i>unit cost</i> | Labor Cost<br><i>hourly rate</i> | Total Cost |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| Education and Outreach | 120                            | 300.00                            | 60.00                            | 7,500.00   |
| Modernize UDBs         | 240                            |                                   | 60.00                            | 14,400.00  |
|                        |                                |                                   |                                  |            |
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|                        |                                |                                   |                                  |            |
| <b>Total</b>           |                                | \$21,900                          |                                  |            |

**Funding Sources** Min. Match Amount (10% of grant funds)

| Funding Type          | Source of Funding | Amount       |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Grant Funds Requested | State of Vermont  | \$ 16,500.00 |
| Municipal Budget      | Town of Chester   | \$ 5,400.00  |
|                       |                   |              |
|                       |                   |              |
| <b>Total</b>          |                   | \$ 21,900.00 |

### Public Outreach (25 points)

Describe who supports this project and the work plan's approach to outreach to partner organizations and the broader public. This should include necessary coordination with state agencies affected by the project, stakeholders impacted by the project, and any under-served, historically discriminated, under-represented, and lower-resourced populations in the community.

The project is supported by the Chester Selectboard, Planning Commission, as well as the local community.

The Work Plan approach is as follows:

#### Task 1: Education and Outreach:

Workshop #1 to review Town Plan housing goals and implementation steps in the Main Street Master Plan, as well as guidance from Zoning for Great Neighborhoods, Fair Housing Law, smart growth principles, etc.

Workshop #2 review the results of the Keys to the Valley project and evaluate data and recommendations specific to Chester

Workshop #3 with Windham and Windsor Housing Trust – housing needs, regulatory barriers, etc.

Workshop #4 with realtors and builders – housing needs, regulatory barriers, etc.

#### Task 2 – Modernize UDBs

Refine Chester's UDBs to modernize the standards and review processes to further community housing goals and village revitalization strategies. This includes the following subtasks:

- a. Review drafts at monthly Planning Commission meetings
- b. Conduct outreach to affected neighborhoods
- c. Prepare final draft
- d. Review final draft at public informational meeting

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### Project Location (25 points)

Describe the geographic areas and zoning districts the project will address and the project's consistency with Vermont's Smart Growth Principles, listed in the [Program Description](#).

The geographic area for this project is townwide, however a particular focus of this effort will be on the village areas where municipal infrastructure exists. We are seeking to make zoning changes that implement recommendations in Chester's Village Center Master Plan and consistent with Vermont's Smart Growth Principles. As such, we will use these funds to evaluate our zoning bylaws with respect to:

1. Being consistent with the historic development pattern of compact village center separated by rural countryside.
2. Appropriate densities and dimensional standards for our existing compact mixed-use center.
3. Enables choice in modes of transportation.
4. Protects important environmental, natural, and historic features, including natural areas, water quality, scenic resources, and historic sites and districts.
5. Supports a diversity of viable businesses in villages.
6. Provides for housing that meets the needs of a diversity of social and income groups in each community.

**Which of the following location-based criteria does this project meet?**

*(check all that apply, and explain as applicable)*

Municipalities with high-demand housing market with limited affordability and cost-burdened household based on information from [www.housingdata.org](http://www.housingdata.org). *(Please explain if checked)*

According to [www.housingdata.org](http://www.housingdata.org), 33% of all Chester households are cost burdened, and 59% of renters pay between 30 and 49 percent of their household income on rent and 17 percent pay 50% on rent. During the pandemic, the housing situation in Chester – like much of Vermont – has gotten more severe.

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Projects that relate to state designated areas in accordance with [24 V.S.A. Chapter 76A](#) *(List designated areas downtown, village, new town center, growth center & neighborhood development area if checked)*

Chester Village has received the Village Center Designation in accordance with 24 V.S.A. Chapter 76A.

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Projects that relate to redevelopment-ready and infill-ready areas served by unconstrained water and wastewater infrastructure *(Please explain if checked)*

The Chester Village Center is the HUB of Chester's economic vitality. Many of these buildings are ready for redevelopment as mixed use commercial and residential.

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Projects that relate to areas likely to result in near-term housing development *(Please explain if checked)*

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Projects that relate to areas eligible for [Neighborhood Development Area](#) (NDA) designation (also known as 'neighborhood planning' areas mappable on [Vermont's Planning Atlas](#)).

As discussed above, this project is focused on zoning changes in and around the villages and where municipal infrastructure exists. We want to ensure that our zoning bylaws avoid unnecessary regulatory barriers and allow for housing options in the walkable neighborhoods that surround the designated Village Center. Many of these areas would be eligible for future designation as a Neighborhood Development Area.

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Projects that will use funding to prepare for and pursue NDA designation

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### Financial Management

Please note that responses to the following questions will not impact the competitiveness of your application and will be used for grant administration purposes only.

Does your organization have an accounting system that will allow you to completely and accurately track the receipt and disbursements of funds related to the award?

Yes

No

What type of accounting system does your municipality use?

Automated

Manual

Combination of both

If an applicant municipality received a Municipal Planning Grant last year, is applying for a Municipal Planning Grant this year, or the project is part of a larger or phased project – please explain.

N/A

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## ATTACHMENTS

Municipal Resolution authorizing application (*required*)

Others (*optional, please list*)

### Vital Communities Letter of Support

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For questions about the competitive criteria or application questions, please contact [Jacob Hemmerick](#) at 802-828-5249. For questions regarding the granting process, or administration, please contact [Jenni Lavoie](#) at 802-828-1948.



| STATE OF VERMONT GRANT AGREEMENT Part 1 - Grant Award Detail   |                       |   |   |   |   |                         |                        |
|--|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|-------------------------|------------------------|
| SECTION I - GENERAL GRANT INFORMATION  |                       |   |   |   |   |                         |                        |
| 1 Grant #: 07110-BMP-2022-04   |                       |   |   | 2 Original <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amendment # _____  |   |                         |                        |
| 3 Grant Title: Bylaw Modernization Grant – Chester UDB Modernization Project   |                       |   |   |   |   |                         |                        |
| 4 Amount Previously Awarded: \$ 0.00   |                       | 5 Amount Awarded This Action: \$16,500.00 |   | 6 Total Award Amount: \$16,500.00   |   |                         |                        |
| 7 Award Start Date: 2/1/2022   |                       |   | 8 Award End Date: 1/31/2024   |   | 9 Subrecipient Award: YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |                         |                        |
| 10 Vendor #: 40701   |                       | 11 Grantee Name: Town of Chester          |   |   |   |                         |                        |
| 12 Grantee Address: 556 Elm Street   |                       |   |   |   |   |                         |                        |
| 13 City: Chester   |                       |   |   | 14 State: VT  |   | 15 Zip Code: 05143      |                        |
| 16 State Granting Agency: Agency of Commerce and Community Development   |                       |   |   |   |   | 17 Business Unit: 07110 |                        |
| 18 Performance Measures: YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>   |                       | 19 Match/In-Kind: \$ 1,650.00             |   | Description: 10% of Total Project Cost, (forgivable match included in grant award)                                    |   |                         |                        |
| 20 If this action is an amendment, the following is amended:<br>Amount: <input type="checkbox"/> Funding Allocation: <input type="checkbox"/> Performance Period: <input type="checkbox"/> Scope of Work: <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/> |                       |   |   |   |   |                         |                        |
| SECTION II - SUBRECIPIENT AWARD INFORMATION  |                       |   |   |   |   |                         |                        |
| 21 Grantee DUNS #: 07399583  |                       |   | 22 Indirect Rate: <u>  n/a  </u> %<br>(Approved rate or de minimis 10%) |   | 23 FFATA: YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>             |                         |                        |
| 24 Grantee Fiscal Year End Month (MM format): 12   |                       |   | 25 R&D: n/a   |   |   |                         |                        |
| 26 DUNS Registered Name (if different than VISION Vendor Name in Box 11):  |                       |   |   |   |   |                         |                        |
| SECTION III - FUNDING ALLOCATION   |                       |   |   |   |   |                         |                        |
| STATE FUNDS  |                       |   |   |   |   |                         |                        |
| Fund Type  | 27 Awarded Previously | 28 Award This Action                      | 29 Cumulative Award   | 30 Special & Other Fund Descriptions  |   |                         |                        |
| General Fund   | \$0.00                | \$0.00                                    | \$0.00  |   |   |                         |                        |
| Special Fund   | \$0.00                | \$14,850.00                               | \$14,850.00   | Bylaw Modernization Grant Funds   |   |                         |                        |
| Special Fund   | \$0.00                | \$1,650.00                                | \$1,650.00  | Bylaw Modernization Grant Funds – Match Reimbursement   |   |                         |                        |
| Other State Funds  | \$0.00                | \$0.00                                    | \$0.00  |   |   |                         |                        |
| FEDERAL FUNDS<br><small>(includes subrecipient Global Commitment funds)</small>  |                       |   |   |   | Required Federal Award Information  |                         |                        |
| 31 CFDA #  | 32 Program Title      | 33 Awarded Previously                     | 34 Award This Action  | 35 Cumulative Award   | 36 FAIN   | 37 Federal Award Date   | 38 Total Federal Award |
|  |                       | \$0.00                                    | \$0.00  | \$0.00  |   |                         | \$0.00                 |
| 39 Federal Awarding Agency:  |                       |   | 40 Federal Award Project Descr:   |   |   |                         |                        |
|  |                       | \$0.00                                    | \$0.00  | \$0.00  |   |                         | \$0.00                 |
| Federal Awarding Agency:   |                       |   | Federal Award Project Descr:  |   |   |                         |                        |
|  |                       | \$0.00                                    | \$0.00  | \$0.00  |   |                         | \$0.00                 |
| Federal Awarding Agency:   |                       |   | Federal Award Project Descr:  |   |   |                         |                        |
|  |                       | \$0.00                                    | \$0.00  | \$0.00  |   |                         | \$0.00                 |
| Federal Awarding Agency:   |                       |   | Federal Award Project Descr:  |   |   |                         |                        |
|  |                       | \$0.00                                    | \$0.00  | \$0.00  |   |                         | \$0.00                 |
| Federal Awarding Agency:   |                       |   | Federal Award Project Descr:  |   |   |                         |                        |
|  |                       | \$0.00                                    | \$0.00  | \$0.00  |   |                         | \$0.00                 |
| <b>Total Awarded - All Funds</b>   |                       | <b>\$0.00</b>                             | <b>\$16,500.00</b>  | <b>\$16,500.00</b>  |   |                         |                        |
| SECTION IV - CONTACT INFORMATION   |                       |   |   |   |   |                         |                        |
| <b>STATE GRANTING AGENCY</b><br>NAME: Jenni Lavoie<br>TITLE: Grant Specialist<br>PHONE: 802-828-1948<br>EMAIL: Jennifer.lavoie@vermont.gov   |                       |   |   | <b>GRANTEE</b><br>NAME: Julie Hance<br>TITLE: Town Manager<br>PHONE: 802-875-2173<br>EMAIL: julie.hance@chestervt.gov |   |                         |                        |

**STATE OF VERMONT GRANT AGREEMENT**

**Part 2 – Standard Agreement**

**BYLAW MODERNIZATION GRANT AGREEMENT**

1. **Parties:** This is a Grant Agreement between State of Vermont **Agency of Commerce and Community Development** (hereinafter called "State" or "Agency") and **Town of Chester** with principal place of business at **556 Elm Street, Chester, VT 05143**, Vermont (hereinafter called "Grantee"). Grantee is not required by law to have a Business Account Number from the Vermont Department of Taxes.
2. **Subject Matter and Source of Funds:** This agreement is authorized by Act 74 §G.600(b)(1)(A).
3. **Award Details:** Amounts, dates and other award details are as shown in the attached **Grant Agreement Part 1 – Grant Award Detail**. A detailed scope of work covered by this award is described in **Attachment A**.
4. **Amendment:** No changes, modifications, or amendments in the terms and conditions of this Grant Agreement shall be effective unless reduced to writing, numbered, and signed by the duly authorized representative of the State and Grantee.
5. **Cancellation:** This Grant Agreement may be suspended or cancelled by either party by giving written notice at least **30** days in advance.
6. **Attachments:** This grant consists of 15 pages including the following attachments that are incorporated herein:  
 Attachment A – Scope of Work to be Performed and Budget Summary  
 Attachment B – Payment Provisions  
 Attachment C – Customary State Grant Provisions  
 Attachment D – Procurement Procedures and Other Grant Requirements
7. **Order of Precedence:** Any ambiguity, conflict or inconsistency in the Grant Documents shall be resolved according to the following order of precedence:  
 Agreement  
 Attachment C  
 Attachment D  
 Attachment A  
 Attachment B

WE THE UNDERSIGNED PARTIES AGREE TO BE BOUND BY THIS GRANT AGREEMENT.

By the State of Vermont:

By the Grantee:

Date: 1/24/2022

Date: 1/24/2022

DocuSigned by:  
  
 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
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DocuSigned by:  
  
 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
65F6EE731EE8433...

Name: Alex Farrell, Deputy Commissioner  
Department of Housing & Community Development

Name: Julie Hance  
Town of Chester

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**Scope of Work and Workplan**

- 1. Project Description:** The Grantee shall use the Grant Funds in compliance with all the terms and conditions of this Agreement to complete the following "Project:"

The purpose of this project is to update Chester's Unified Development Bylaws to implement the Town Plan and Village Center Master Plan, with a particular focus on modernizing the document to better address housing and further village revitalization goals.

**2. Project Budget:**

| Item Description       | Quantity | Material Cost | Labor Cost | Total Cost         |
|------------------------|----------|---------------|------------|--------------------|
| Education and Outreach | 120      | \$300.00      | \$60.00    | \$7,500.00         |
| Modernize UDBs         | 240      |               | \$60.00    | \$14,400.00        |
| <b>Total</b>           |          |               |            | <b>\$21,900.00</b> |

**Funding Sources:**

| Source                             | Amount             |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Bylaw Modernization Grant Funds    | \$14,850.00        |
| Chester Required Town Match        | \$1,650.00         |
| Town of Chester – Municipal Budget | \$5,400.00         |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>\$21,900.00</b> |

The Housing Study Grant requirements for completion:

The grant closeout requires a final report demonstrating compliance with the program's requirements; please remember that all projects must:

- Increase housing choice, affordability, and opportunity *in smart growth areas*.
- Consult Vermont Housing Finance Agency's [community housing profile](#) and [housing-ready toolbox](#).
- Consult the [Enabling Better Places: A Zoning Guide for Vermont Neighborhoods](#).
- Consult the [Neighborhood Development Area](#) designation checklists as a model for pedestrian-oriented smart growth neighborhoods, as appropriate.
- Comply with State & Federal Fair Housing Law, including the fair housing provisions of Vermont's Planning & Development Act.
- Implement the municipal plan's housing chapter unless the chapter itself needs updating.
- Based on the best available information and as appropriate, identify municipal water supply and wastewater disposal capacity and system constraints, and map the service areas.
- Avoid development of and minimize impact to important natural resources.
- Increase allowed lot/building/dwelling unit density by adopting dimensional, use, parking, and other standards that allow compact neighborhood form and support walkable lot and unit density, which may be achieved with a standard allowing at least four per acre or allowing obtention of a State and/or municipal water & wastewater permit to determine allowable density.
- Increase allowed housing types and uses, which may include duplexes to the same extent as single-family homes.
- Reduce nonconformities by making the allowed standards principally conform to the existing settlement (lots, buildings, and uses) within designated centers.
- Include street standards that implement the complete streets principles as described in [19 V.S.A. §309d](#) and that are oriented to pedestrians.
- Include parking waiver provisions.
- Avoid new development in flood hazard areas, undeveloped floodplains, and river corridor areas, unless lawfully allowed for infill development or as acceptable in [§§29-201 of the Vermont Flood Hazard Area and River Corridor Rule](#).