

Village of Shelburne Falls Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP) – Project Proposals

The Towns of Buckland and Shelburne, with a community partner who is a former Board member of the Greater Shelburne Falls Area Business Association (which is presently an inactive organization), were selected to participate in DHCD's Local Rapid Recovery Planning Program. The Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) is serving as their Plan Facilitator. The Draft Village of Shelburne Falls Rapid Recovery Plan was presented at a Community Meeting on 8/25 and is posted online [here](#). The Draft Plan will be presented for approval at the 9/27 Shelburne Select Board meeting and at the 10/5 Buckland Select Board meeting, before it is submitted to DHCD on 10/8.

Two proposals are included for consideration by the EDC. Both proposals are recommended projects identified in the Draft Village of Shelburne Falls RRP.

PROPOSAL: *Build Staff Capacity for Project Implementation and Enhance Communication Project's Study of Organizational Models*

Presently, there is not a single organization that has capacity and resources available to implement recommended projects in the RRP. The Greater Shelburne Falls Area Business Association (GSFABA) is an inactive organization, without a current Board of Directors. Volunteers and former Board members continue to conduct some minimal tasks with the resources remaining, such as paying for the ShelburneFalls.com webhosting and domain name. Both the Towns of Buckland and Shelburne have Town Administrators and other professional staff to manage the operations of municipal government and advance infrastructure projects, as resources allows. At this time, there is no capacity at the Town Halls to take on additional economic and community development projects. The Shelburne Falls Area Partnership, once consisted of regular collaborative meetings of the GSFABA Executive Director and each Town's Select Board. The Partnership is also inactive at this time. As a result, there is no existing capacity or organized communication structure to advance projects, like the those recommended in the RRP.

The *Build Staff Capacity for Project Implementation and Enhance Communication Project* proposes to undertake a process of community engagement that will build the staff capacity (volunteer and professional) necessary to advance projects and activities identified in the Rapid Recovery Plan, and to enhance communication among Village Center businesses, community organizations and municipal officials. This project has three primary tasks. They are: (1) to hold a Summit in October or November 2021 for the village business community and municipal officials to identify short-term tasks to be accomplished over the next 18-months by volunteer assistance and confirm volunteers who will be responsible for their implementation; (2) to form a Village Center Task Force to monitor the implementation of these tasks; and (3) to hire a consultant to conduct a study of organizational models that could provide staff capacity. This request focuses on the third element of this project.

The Towns of Buckland and Shelburne are seeking \$22,500 to procure professional consultant services to conduct an assessment of organizational models that could provide project implementation capacity. The Village Task Force will assist with the procurement of process to hire the consultant, and provide guidance to the selected consultant. Final report from the assessment will be presented to the Task Force at a public meeting for discussion. The Task Force will then pursue the model that is determined to be most feasible.

Scope of Work

Task 1 – Consultant Selection (\$2,500)

If the Towns choose to, they can contract with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) Chief Procurement Officer to conduct the public procurement process to hire a consultant. FRCOG Planning staff will prepare a Request for Qualifications (RFQ). The FRCOG Chief Procurement Officer will conduct the public procurement process and prepare a draft contract between the lead Town and the selected Consultant.

Task 2 – Consultant Selection (\$20,000)

The consultant will work with the Village Task Force to identify the essential elements needed in an organization model that is financially sustainable in order to successfully move implementation projects forward. The discussion of essential elements would address the issues of staffing and funding requirements to implement RRP projects and future projects with a focus on the Shelburne Falls village center.

The consultant will identify different organizational models including, but not limited to, a municipal staff position, a new Village focus non-profit organization, a revitalized GSFABA, a renewed public-private Shelburne Falls Area Partnership, and a business improvement district management structure. The Consultant will evaluate each model for their financial feasibility and sustainability to successfully implement projects, generate community support, and attract short and long term funding sources.

The consultant will review their draft evaluations and recommendations with the Task Force. The consultant will prepare a job description for the primary staff person in the preferred structure. The consultant will then prepare and present a final report to the Task Force.

PROPOSAL: *Create More Opportunities for Outdoor Dining, Selling and Events [Temporary/Seasonal Space] Project*

The RRP recommended project is create new temporary, seasonal public spaces for patrons of local businesses to use for outdoor dining and/or to hold pop-up shopping experiences or cultural events/entertainment. The creation of additional outdoor dining space and selling spaces will be important to increase the sales revenues of restaurants, artisan and retail businesses, and is a key response to addressing the COVID-19 pandemic.

The project proposes a process to identify one to two locations for temporary/seasonal space to accommodate these uses. There are a few locations in the Village that should be considered to host this pop-up park concept, pending agreement with the property owner if needed. The locations include two empty lots on Bridge Street and behind the Arms Library in Shelburne, and Malley Park on the Buckland side. Another option is to reuse 2 to 3 parking spaces for this purpose. The final selection of the two locations, one on each side of the Deerfield River, will be approved by the respective Select Boards for the two towns.

To implement this project, the Towns of Buckland and Shelburne \$19,500 to purchase street furniture, equipment and supplies, and for two public art pieces. Examples of street furniture and equipment to be purchased include: rolling wood planters that serve to delineate the space, concrete Jersey barriers to separate the pedestrian space from vehicles, portable freestanding outdoor heaters, picnic tables or bistro table & chair sets, etc. The direct costs for this project is estimated to be \$16,500. The remaining

\$3,000 would be for a public art project at a pop-up park location in each town of Buckland and in Shelburne.

A solicitation will be issued requesting public art project designs for use at a pop-up park location on the Buckland side and on the Shelburne side. The Village Task Force will work, with support from FRCOG Planning staff, to issue the request and conduct a process to select final designs for each location. The remaining \$3,000 would be used to pay the artist and supplies for the two projects.