

Section 1.

Applicant Information

1.1. Primary Location:

Leverett

Regional Planning Agency	<i>Franklin Regional Council of Governments</i>	Housing Choice	<i>No</i>	Rural or Small Town	<i>Both</i>
MDFA Regional Office	<i>West</i>	MVP Community	<i>No</i>	Gateway City	<i>N/A</i>
MassDOT Highway Division	<i>District 2</i>	Green Community	<i>Yes - Green</i>	EOHED Region	<i>Pioneer Valley</i>

1.2. Organization Type

Public Entity

- Municipality
- Public Housing Authority
- Redevelopment Authority or Similar Quasi-Governmental Agency
- Other Public Entity, please specify:

Non-Public Entity

1.3. Applicant Organization Name:

Town of Leverett

1.4. Applicant Organization Legal Address:

9 Montague Road

1.5. City/Town:

Leverett

1.6. State:

Massachusetts

1.7. Zip Code:

01054

1.8. CEO Name:

Julia Shively

1.9 CEO Title:

Chair, Selectboard

1.10. CEO Tel.:

(413) 548-9699

1.11. CEO Email:

selectboard@leverett.ma.us

1.12. Project Contact Name/Title (if different)

Marjorie McGinnis

1.13. Contact Tel.:

(413) 548-9699

1.14 Contact Email

townadministrator@leverett.ma.us

1.15. If applicable, list the name and contact for any additional partner organizations:

Several municipal departments, including the Planning Board and the Sustainable Economy Committee

Section 2.

Applicant / Community Background

2.1 Describe applicant’s primary economic development goals, assets, and opportunities.

The Town of Leverett, population 2,000, is a beautiful town located in rural Franklin County and abutting the Hampshire County Town of Amherst. This location provides Leverett with the opportunities generated by being within easy commuting and traveling distance of the Amherst and Northampton Five-College Area while also exposes this small town to the economic pressures of a large town while it does not have the resources of a large town. Leverett wishes to utilize several avenues to enhance the natural and economic assets that it has while attracting new residents and businesses to town. Leverett hopes to balance these pressures by making sure that the roads and commuting routes are in good condition, the health and safety of residents is protected, that the community is attractive and affordable to everyone, and that growth occurs in a measured and planned way. Assets include motivated town committees and employees, many preserved natural properties and two active village centers: one with the town hall, church, post office, arts facility, easily accessible pond and other historic structures; and the second with a small store, historic mills and structures, a nearby river and hiking areas. One major asset is the municipally owned fiber to the home system. A goal of the town and residents is to reduce the environmental footprint of the municipality and its residents for future generations.

2.2 Describe the main challenges and/or obstacles to progress

The primary challenges to progress for Leverett are the lack of public infrastructure such as water and sewer that make developing public facilities and new residential areas easier and less expensive. Structures in both village centers are limited in lot space for development. Other obstacles are current zoning restrictions, lack of paid planning staff to champion large projects, the cost of such projects and the need to keep them at a scale that matches the town. Leverett has an Affordable Housing Trust, which tried for several years to attract a developer to help generate either senior and/or affordable housing in town, but the number of units and size that was needed to make the projects financially feasible were too large for the town. Leverett has its own elementary school, which has experienced a decrease in the number of students it serves as the town’s population ages, but the required demands placed on the school increases so the budget increases each year and the town struggles with how to afford the school’s expenses and keep it attractive to families so that families do not choose to send their children to other schools.

2.3 Describe any major community and economic development project(s) that the applicant has undertaken in the past 5 years.

Leverett is the first Western Mass community to build its own municipal fiber to the home system and provide every house in town with a high-speed broadband connection at an affordable cost. Completed in 2015, this project has supported home businesses, residential growth and provided an infrastructure baseline. Leverett also has a Community Preservation fund which has helped restore and preserve some of the historical and recreational resources in town. The Town created a Revenue Committee (now the Sustainable Economy Committee) a couple years ago to help the town explore new avenues for revenue. In 2019, the town passed local tax and impact fee options available for meals tax and short-term rentals. In 2019 the town received Small Town Housing Choice funds to examine the options and design the waterline connection to Amherst to address a water contamination issue. Leverett still has an active 2017 CBDG regional block grant that is administered through our regional housing authority to provide housing rehabilitation loans to income qualified residents. The Leverett Affordable Housing Trust as created two programs to help income qualified individuals and families purchase houses in town.

2.4 If the community has completed any community economic development (including housing) best practices through the Community Compact Best Practices Program, specify which ones and describe the outcome(s) of that process. (If none, enter "N/A".)

Leverett has utilized Community Compact funds to complete an IT assessment of the town’s computer inventory and its risk exposures; to establish a set of Financial Policies; to complete an Americans with Disabilities Act Self Evaluation and Transition Plan; to complete a new all-encompassing Capital Plan; to complete a systematic town IT back-up project; to establish a Narcan supply for first responders; and the town is still in the process of completing a regionalization project to combine our police department with a neighboring town. Leverett also received Community Compact IT funds to purchase the equipment needed to put the IT security firewall and back-and security systems that were identified by the Best Practice initiatives in place. In May 2021, Leverett received an Community Compact Efficiency and Regionalization grant to complete our policing agreement with the neighboring Town of Wendell and to make the abandoned Wendell police station a viable regional station for both towns and future towns who might join into our agreement in the future.

2.5 Indicate which, if any, of the following tools/strategies have been adopted by the community to promote economic development and growth. (Check all that apply or None.)

X	Economic Development Tool / Strategy
	Approved Master Plan
	Approved Urban Renewal Plan
	43D Expedited Permitting District
	Priority Development Site(s) Designation
	Approved Tax Increment Financing District

	Business Improvement District, Main Streets, or similar District
	Federal Economic Development District
	Designated Opportunity Zone(s)
✓	Community Compact Best Practices and/or Regionalization Project
	Complete Streets Prioritization Plan
✓	Commercial zoning by-right
✓	Other. Specify: <i>Housing Choice funds received for water contamination issue</i>
	None
	Do Not Know

2.6 Indicate which, if any, of the following tools/strategies have been adopted by the community to promote housing development. (Check all that apply or None. If unsure, check "Do not know".)

X	Housing Tools and Strategies
	Inclusionary Zoning with density bonus
	40R Smart Growth or Starter Home District zoning
	Zoning that allows mixed-use development near transit and activities
	Zoning that allows multifamily development near transit and activities
✓	Zoning that allows duplexes in most residential districts
✓	Zoning that allows Accessory Dwelling Units in most residential districts
	Zoning that requires no more than 1 parking space per unit for multifamily units
	Majority of land use board members receive training on a regular basis
	Approved Housing Production Plan
	CERTIFIED Housing Production Plan
	Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) above 10%
	Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) increased by 2.5% in last 5 years
✓	Designated local funds for housing (e.g. Affordable Housing Trust or CPA Funds)
	Donated municipal land for housing
✓	Local property tax relief programs for income eligible seniors (MGL c 59 S. 5)
	Plan to address homelessness of a high need group
	Urban Center Housing Tax Increment Financing, Housing Development Incentive Program (HDIP), or an Urban Renewal Plan with significant housing
	Federal Choice Neighborhood
	HUD Fair Housing Assessment
✓	Other. Specify: <i>Affordable Housing Trust programs to promote affordable home ownership and permanently affordable units</i>
	None
	Do Not Know

Section 3.

Project Summary

3.1. Project Categories for Grant Considerations (all that apply). Please note, that by checking a box in this question, additional questions will appear in the application related to that funding type (**note: Section 1.1 and 1.2 must be completed before selecting an option here**).

- Community Capacity Building
- Planning and Zoning
- Site Preparation
- Predevelopment and Permitting
- Building
- Infrastructure

Other: Special Project in a Small Town or Rural Community

3.2. Project Name:

Town of Leverett Master Plan

3.3. Brief Project Description/Abstract:

This grant application is for the first of two phases for the creation of a Master Plan for the Town of Leverett. The Town plans to apply for again next year to cover the second phase. Leverett has never had a Master Plan and the town currently finds itself at a crossroads of many pressures, such as economic, social, housing and environmental, that lends itself to the completion of a Master Plan.

3.4. Is this project located in any of the following designated areas? (Check all that apply or None):

- Downtown or commercial area
- Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) District
- 43D Expedited Permitting District
- None
- Opportunity Zone

3.5. If located in an Opportunity Zone, will the project be supported by an Opportunity Fund Investment?

Note: If yes, the name of the Fund and/or the managing entity will be required during the review.

Yes

No

Not Applicable

3.6. Does the project support and/or directly result in any of the following (particularly as they relate to the state's Sustainable Development Goals)? (Check all that apply or None)

- Transit-Oriented Developments (located within a half mile of a transit station)
- Developments that contain a mix of residential and commercial uses
- Production or Preservation of Housing, with density of at least four units to the acre
- Developments that are re-using previously developed sites
- Development of under-utilized properties
- Development of Small Businesses
- None

3.7. Does the community have an active housing moratorium or any type of restriction of new housing?

Yes

No

3.8. In what ways does this project support housing development? (Check all that apply or None)

- Creates new housing units
- Supports the creation of new housing units
- Preserves existing affordable housing
- Studies/analyzes the feasibility of new housing on a site/area
- None. Not related to housing

3.9. Is this project directly related to and/or seeking to support efforts related to economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic?

Yes

No

3.11. Does this project promote Equitable Opportunities? (Equitable Opportunity is a principle outlined in the state's economic development plan - Partnerships for Growth. For reference, please visit <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/partnerships-for-growth>.)

Yes

No

3.12. If yes, describe how this project promotes Equitable Opportunities:

A Master Plan for Leverett will examine and promote the four pillars expressed by the Equitable Opportunities initiative in Leverett. Those same concerns, such as the need for affordable housing, vibrant communities, local businesses and skilled employees and residents, are some of the

drivers that have *Leverett* hopes to address and support in our *Master Plan* to ensure the town's success in the future.

3.13. Does this project create any environmental benefits and/or build the community's resilience to existing or future impacts of climate change?

Yes

No

3.15. Does the applicant have a letter from the municipal CEO outlining knowledge of and support for the proposed project? If yes, attach support letter.

Yes

No

3.16. **ATTACHMENT: In Section 14, attach a support letter from the municipal CEO.** 3.18 **FOR OFFICE USE ONLY: The table below will display the total request amount from each of the corresponding budget tables, based on the category selection(s) at 3.1 above. It will remain blank until the applicant begins to enter budget numbers in any of the respective sections of this application. The values in this table will be automatically updated, only AFTER the budget numbers in each section are entered/changed and that page is saved.**Section / Category

	Amount Requested
	Section 5: Capacity Building
	\$0
Section 6: Planning and Zoning	\$0
Section 7: Site Preparation	\$0
Section 8: Predevelopment and Permitting	\$0
Section 9: Building	\$0
Section 10: Infrastructure	\$0
Section 11: Special Project: Housing Choice	\$0
Section 12: Special Project: Rural/Small Town	\$0
	Grand Total Requested
	\$0

Section 4.

Project Details / Core Information

4.1. Project Narrative – Provide a detailed description of the project for which you are requesting grant assistance. Include details about work and planned uses for the grant.

This grant application is for the first of two phases of creation of a Master Plan. We will apply for a grant next year to cover the second phase.

The Town of Leverett has never done a Master Plan. Its zoning bylaws are outdated and reflect a time decades ago when the primary threat was rapid over-development. Currently, the Town has a clear need to address its residential tax rate, which is approaching the \$25/\$1,000 limit. Economic sustainability will require increasing development, probably in the form of newhousing, while balancing our long-standing commitment to protecting its environmental resources. Creation of a Master Plan will focus the community conversation on howadditional housing and other creative economic development options would impact the other planning elements within Section 81D: land use regulations and strategies, circulation, open space and recreation, cultural (including historical) and natural resources, and municipal services and facilities. The goals and policy statement and the implementation plan would derive from the Town's investigation of these overlaps.

The Town's focus on its need for housing, especially affordable house, and economic development raises the question of resiliency: environmental, economic, and social. For example, Leverett has significant hills which magnify flooding erosion from significant stormwater events; these floods threaten existing residences. A Master Plan would facilitate a discussion about howwe could encourage development in areas less prone to catastrophic flooding. Similarly, much of the land is forested and faces threats from a changing climate. A Master Plan would help us prevent development that impacts critical habitats.

Lack of newdevelopment adversely affects the Town's economic resiliency. A Master Plan would allowus to focus zoning and municipal investments in ways that would increase newhousing while balancing environmental considerations. The Town has little commercial development, and the lack of infrastructure reduces prospects of commercial growth. Although the Town does have municipally owned fiber optic broadband, it has no central water or sewer system. Housing stock is severely limited. However, our rich natural environment, proximity to UMass Amherst and our excellent school system make Leverett an attractive place to live for people leaving urban areas.

Creation of a Master Plan would also create a context to discuss the social and economic equity issues of our current zoning. Our very limited commercial or industrial development and our dedication to a high level of investment in our school system means that our real estate taxes are very high. Also, our zoning may increase the cost of newhome construction. Together these factors reduce opportunities for fixed-income and moderate-income people to live here.

However, the Town's social resiliency is a significant strength. The Town has an engaged and educated community that is enthusiastic about the planning process. With help from a consultant, this community could create a true community-led comprehensive plan that addresses both the statutory requirements of Section 81D and the major needs of the Town.

Once completed, the comprehensive plan will provide a framework for future regulatory changes, newpolicies for Town officials, and a guide to future investment of both monetary resources and staff and volunteer time. The latter is particularly important; the Town does not have a large staff and thus relies on volunteers from a small population of 2,000 to assist with government needs. A community-wide Master Plan will help focus the actions of our volunteer committees toward solving the problems we face as a community.

4.2. Leadership and Ability to Execute – Describe the leadership and project management group for this project and why it is an effective team to advance this project.

Creation of a Master Plan will fall under the responsibility of the Planning Board, as required by 81D. It will be carried out with the help of an experienced consultant. The Planning Board, in consultation with the Select Board, will create a Master Plan Working Group comprised of a cross-section of the community to oversee the work. The Planning Board recognizes that the success of the plan hinges on the ability to fully engage the community and is dedicated to doing so. The Town plans to include a minimum of 100 hours of volunteer time as an inkind match to this project.

Finding the right consultant will be critical to the success of this project. The request for proposals will seek qualified planning consultants with experience helping small, rural towns, and in accordance with State contracting regulations

4.3. Progress to date – What progress has the applicant made on this project to date? Include details about planning, stakeholder engagement, development tools used, noting if the project is included in any adopted municipal or regional plans (e.g. Master Plan, CEDS, HPP, etc.), etc.

Progress made on this project to date has included economic development research and outreach, and consensus-building among community stakeholders.

In 2018, public discussion about the risk of Leverett’s approach to the Proposition 2 ½ property tax cap prompted a proactive effort to increase revenue. The April 2019 Town Meeting established a Revenue Committee (nowrenamed the Sustainable Economy Committee) of volunteer appointees to explore and recommend revenue opportunities.

To better understand the current potential for development, the Committee researched businesses that could match Leverett’s hilly terrain and social qualities, solicited feedback from others in Town Government, and surveyed over 300 residents on development preferences and sentiments. To better understand the investor’s point of view, the Committee met with rural planning subject-matter experts from FRCOG, UMass Amherst, and other towns, and with property developers and businesses. To better understand the problem of tax rate growth the Committee analyzed ten years of budget, tax and assessment data. The outcome of this research includes a comprehensive report and an invigorated community discussion on Leverett’s economic sustainability and livability.

A key finding of the report was that the complexity of development and municipal investment decision-making merits guidance by an expert planner. This finding and ensuing discussion led by Planning and Select Boards has persuaded community stakeholders that the time is right to pursue a Master Plan. Leverett has a collaborative Town Government that nowembraces development of a plan that will unify efforts to revise zoning, build housing that is affordable, promote business, promote livability and inclusivity, revitalize and celebrate historic village centers, preserve natural and recreational environments, strengthen climate change resilience, and foster partnership with neighboring towns and regional associations.

4.4. Timeline – Provide the Start/End dates for the overall project and any other notable periods. Note: Grants will be announced in Fall 2021 for contracts starting in FY22. Dates below should reflect that timing.

Target Start Date of the Project:	Date 12/1/2021
Target End Date of the Project:	Date 6/15/2022
Other. Specify: Complete Task 2	Date 6/1/2022
Other. Specify: Complete Task 3	Date 5/31/2022

4.5. Timeline Information – Describe the timeline for the project and provide information about any notable dates and/or milestones.

Leverett plans to initiate the project upon project award and take a month or two to secure the correct consultant for the Master Plan. Once secured, the consultant will move into collecting background information, creating a working group, and getting the project set up, as a combination of online and in person meetings are planned to get started. Target date to get this Task 1 complete is the end of March 2022. Once Task 1 is complete, the consultant will guide the town through Task 2, which is learning existing conditions. Task 2 is projected to take until the beginning of June 2022. Task 3, Community Visioning, will begin in April 2022 and run concurrently with some of the Task 2 meetings so that the town has sufficient time to really examine residents needs for the future.

Leverett has chosen to break this project into two years to allowfor sufficient time for all the steps involved to take place and for a wide involvement of residents.

4.6. Anticipated Outcomes - Provide a detailed description of the anticipated outcomes of the project. Include information about leveraged development, housing, jobs, residents or businesses supported, etc.

Leverett needs a Master Plan to support thoughtful development. Our zoning is decades old and has not had a thorough review and revision. Our zoning is restrictive and requires large lots. We have a tiny amount of commercially zoned land. Creation of a Master Plan will focus the community conversation on additional housing and creative economic development options to benefit our community.

We expect the following outcomes from a Master Plan implementation:

? New housing production through better zoning that encourages housing development while protecting the environment

? Increased commercial development

? Better protection of critical habitat and other environmentally sensitive zones by incorporating well-informed environmental constraints into zoning and municipal investment decisions

? Advancing social equity with more thoughtful zoning and a lower tax rate

? A more economically sustainable community by increasing new development to reduce the high tax rate

? Better utilization of community historic and open space resources

? Encouragement of development of outside areas that are subject to flooding

? More concentrated development with less environmental impact through revisions of zoning

? More housing units by better use of accessory dwelling regulations and more affordable housing

? Better utilization of past municipal investments such as roads and our municipal fiber optic network by allowing more concentrated development

We expect the first year of the Master Plan development process funded to deliver outcomes of the first half of a Master Plan. These outcomes will include the establishment of a Master Plan Working Group and process for transparency and approval, baseline discovery of existing conditions with respect to the elements of Section 81D, in-depth conversations with community members to develop a long-term development vision, and preparation for the second and final year of the Master Plan development process.

Section 6.

Planning and Zoning Additional Questions

6.1 What type of development plan or study are you seeking to fund? (*Check One*)

- Master Parking Management Plan
- Plan
- Land Use Market Feasibility Study
- Plan
- Urban Zoning Review and Updates
- Plan
- Renewal
- Housing Other:
- Production
- Plan
- Downtown
- Plan

6.2 Scope of Work - Describe the proposed work that will be carried out by this project. If applicable, describe the specific geographic area.

The Tasks for the entire project and long-term implementation are outlined below. The funding support requested in this application will cover the first year of Master Plan development, including Tasks 1 through 3.

Task 1: Establish a Master Plan Working Group and a Process for Transparency and Approval and Project Initiation

The contracted Planning Consultant will assist the Town with recruitment of a Master Plan Working Group. The Town has the option of appointing members or allowing interested municipal officials and residents to volunteer to participate on the Master Plan Committee. Although only the Planning Board must adopt the plan, zoning and other by-law changes must go to Town Meeting for approval. The Consultant will assist the Town on a process for maintaining transparency with stakeholders and for determining the final approval process. The Consultant will review Zoning Bylaws and recent planning studies such as board and committee reports.

The Consultant will facilitate a meeting between Town officials and the Working Group to discuss the scope of work, timeline, roles and responsibilities. The Town will prepare previous planning documents for meeting review, and the groups will tour key sites and spaces in town.

Task 2: Existing Conditions

The Consultant will facilitate Working Group development of a baseline understanding of existing conditions, using elements of Section 81D to organize their research: Housing, Transportation, Economic Development, Community Facilities & Services, Land Use & Zoning and Energy & Sustainability. The consultant will facilitate a discovery session on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and barriers, to inform the visioning process for the wider community.

Task 3: Community Visioning

The Consultant and the Working Group will sponsor in-depth conversations in person and online with community members, and synthesize outputs of these conversations to develop a goals and policies statement organized around elements of Section 81D that will establish a guiding vision for the Town for the next thirty years.

Task 4: Options, Trade-offs, and Choices

The Consultant and the Working Group will use the outputs of Tasks 3 and 4 to develop a statement of options for the community to consider. Anchored by the elements of 81D, the statement will include an explanation for each option of required investment, required policy and regulation changes, and expected outcomes and impact. A second period of community conversations would dive into these options, their trade-offs, and pathways to final recommendations, in order to facilitate community-driven choices that will inform the draft plan.

Task 5: Draft Plan and Implementation Plan

The Consultant will guide the Working Group in the production of a draft comprehensive plan that brings together the collective understanding of existing conditions, implications for the Town's future, the draft goals and policy statement, and community choices made in Task 5. This draft will include an implementation plan that charts a series of actions and strategies. The Working Group will seek public comment on the draft, and will work with the Consultant to synthesize public comment with a final document that is representative of the community. The Consultant will also help with additional research and resources, precedents, maps, illustrations, and layout.

Task 6: Approval and Final Plan

The Planning Board will review the draft plan and take it through the plan approval process decided during Task 1.

Task 7: Implementation and Continuous Improvement (not part of consultant Scope)

The Planning Board with support from the Select Board and Sustainable Economy Committee will lead Master Plan implementation and establish a schedule of reports and community outreach to ensure transparency and the collection of feedback, measurements of success, assessment of barriers, and the process of revising the plan in response to changing conditions.

6.3 ATTACHMENT: In Section 14, attach a map or conceptual drawing showing the location of the planned district and/or project area.

6.4 Budget - In the table below, provide a breakdown, by spending category, of the total budget for the project. Enter the grant amount(s) requested/allocated for each category and the amount(s) covered with matching funds, if any.

Spending Category	Funds Requested	Match / Other Funds	Total Project Budget	Source of Match / Other Funds
Personnel (incl. tax/ fringe)	\$	\$	\$0	
Consultants / Prof. Fees	\$36000	\$	\$36000	

Meeting Express / Events	\$	\$500	\$500	town budgets to advertise and arrange meetings
Project Supplies / Materials	\$3000	\$	\$3000	
Other / Miscellaneous	\$	\$2854	\$2854	volunteer hours
Total	\$39000	\$3354	\$42354	

6.5 Provide line item explanations, justifications, and/or notes, as needed.

Leverett plans to engage a consultant to complete the first three tasks involved in the Master Planning process during the first year. This will create a baseline for Project Initiation, include the information gathering for the Existing Conditions task and complete the meetings required for the Community Visioning task. These will be completed in the \$36,000 grant fund requested. The grant request also includes \$3,000 for direct costs including setting up a website for the project, subscribing to an online engagement tool, funds for supplies and printing costs and for the consultant travel expenses. The town will commit to a match of at least \$3,354 as it will pay for mailing to all households in town and other event expenses and volunteer time as an in-kind match of 100 hours at the \$28.54 per hour national volunteer rate (<http://independentsector.com>).

6.6 Describe the source(s) and status of all matching funds.

Funds for mailings and meeting events will come from appropriated FY 22 town budgets. In kind match for volunteer hours will come from a minimum of 10 volunteers who will attend a least 5 meeting for the project, which equals 100 hours of volunteer time. Independentsector.org rates volunteer time at \$28.54 per hour.

6.7 ATTACHMENT: In Section 14, attach a cost estimate or proposal from perspective consultant(s) or professional services provider(s) for this project.

6.8 If known, provide the contact information for the provider undertaking the project.

Entity/Company:	Phone:
Contact Name/Title:	Email:

6.9 Project Need - Describe why the project is needed and the expected and the expected short and long term impacts.

Leverett has never had a Master Plan. Its zoning bylaws reflect a time decades ago when the threat was over-development. We need to revise our zoning to reflect the current needs and constraints of our community. The Town must address its tax rate, which is approaching the \$25/\$1,000 limit. A Master Plan will focus the community conversation on evidence-based development options and sustainable housing development to broaden our tax base and create shared prosperity.

The immediate outcome will be a systemic revision of our zoning regulations to increase housing construction, invite commercial development, and reinforce our long-standing commitment to environmental protection.

For the next several decades, the Master Plan and future revisions will reveal a sustainable and prosperous path and will serve as a common point of reference for decisions about zoning, municipal investments, environmental conservation, livability, and social equity.

6.10 Public Engagement - Describe the community engagement process for the project.

Leverett is well stocked with community members who reach out skilfully and proactively to one another and to Town Government for engagement on community matters. The problems that the town needs to address with a Master Plan have been under shared discussion by residents for years. One of the intended outcomes of a Master Plan will be to unify many threads of discussion under a single planning document.

Community engagement will begin with Working Group recruitment that prioritizes inclusivity from among segments of town population. Diverse membership will make the Working Group more welcoming to a diverse set of community members, fostering greater engagement.

Engagement will take place in person and online, and will include one-on-one and small group dialogues, interviews, and listening sessions; surveys; and regular presentations and reports in established newsletters, online forums, and meetings.

6.11 Community Leadership Group - If existing, describe the group of individuals that will work on this project and what makes it innovative or effective in community economic development. If not yet formed, describe the plan for the group's composition and work.

A primary objective will be to form a collective sense of how we want to develop as a community. Inclusivity at every level of the plan will be central to the success of this objective. This dedication to inclusivity will begin with the Working Group. The Planning Board, in consultation with the Select Board, will recruit Working Group members from a cross-section of the community in order to represent town diversity.

We know that familiar conflicts will be central to this work. For example, there are stark differences over development and conservation of forests and wildlife. There are well-worn disagreements over education funding and affordability. We have faced difficult issues in the past and learned as a community that the best way to make progress is to listen thoughtfully. Working Group members will be recruited to include people able to represent different positions and visions of Leverett's future, as well as people with conflict resolution and group facilitation skills.

6.12 Sustainability – Describe how the work of this group will be carried out and how it will be sustained over time, particularly past the time of this grant request.

The Working Group will cultivate a shared sense of Master Plan ownership throughout the community by keeping community members informed and engaged. The more the community feels informed and engaged by the project, the more they will feel ownership of the plan, identification with its goals, and long-term trust in a public resource to guide decisions and measure success.

This project has a two-year timeline. The budget and timeline have been designed to complete Task 1 through Task 3 by the end of the one-year grant. This timeline provides for thorough discovery of existing conditions and discussion of goals, policies and community vision, setting up for success the second year and implementation. During implementation, the Planning Board and Sustainable Economy Committee will update the community with quarterly reports and presentations of implementation achievements and barriers, and reach out continuously to community members for engagement and feedback.

6.13 Implementation – Describe the enactment, adoption, and/or implementation process for the plan(s) completed by this project. Identify any necessary review and/or approval entities such as Planning Board, Council or Select board and/or subcommittee Committee, town meeting, etc.

Enactment and adoption of a completed Master Plan will require Town Meeting approval. Any zoning or other land use regulation changes that arise from the Master Plan will first be reviewed by the Planning Board, and then be approved by Town Meeting.

The Master Plan will include implementation roadmaps that identify in advance the review and approval requirements of each Master Plan element. For example, plans and bylaw changes concerning septic systems will require the periodic review and approval of the Board of Health. For another example, plans and bylaw changes that impact open spaces will require the periodic review and approval of the Recreation Committee and the Conservation Commission.

Regular collection of feedback and gap analysis conducted by the Planning Board will inform an annual review process by which Master Plan revisions are reviewed and approved by the Planning Board and Select Board.

Section 13.

Certification of Application Submission Authority

13.1 If the applicant is a public entity, does the submission of this application require a formal vote of any board, commission, or other local entity? If Yes, attachment required.

Yes

No

Not Applicable

13.3 If the applicant is a non-public entity, does the submission of this application require the authorization of the entity's board of directors, or other governing body or bylaw? If Yes, attachment required.

Yes

No

Not Applicable

I,

Marjorie McGinnis

(Submitter Name), hereby certify that I am duly authorized to submit this application on behalf of

Town of Leverett

(Applicant Organization Name). By entering my name in the space below, I further certify, under the pains and penalties of perjury, that the responses to the questions provided in this application, and the attached documentation, are true, accurate, and complete. I understand that the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED) and its partner organizations, specifically the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and the Massachusetts Development Finance Agency (MDFA), will rely on the information provided in this application to make decisions about whether to award a grant from their respective funding sources. Also, that the Commonwealth reserves the right to take action against me, the applicant organization, and/or any other beneficiary of a grant, if any of the information provided is determined to be false, inaccurate, or misleading. I also affirm that, if awarded, the applicant organization has the capacity to carry out the project in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Marjorie McGinnis

*Executive Administrator***Title**

6/4/2021 12:50:44 PM

Section 14.

Required Attachments

In this section, upload all attachments that support this application.

Required, if Applicable

The following items are required, if applicable, and as noted in each section. Use the Select button, at the right of each description, to upload the response. (Each line will only accept one attachment.) In cases where the response has multiple documents, these should be combined into one PDF file.

Section - Attachment Name	Referenced Question #	Description
3. Summary – Municipal CEO Letter	3.16	Letter from the municipal CEO outlining support for the applicant and/or proposed project. <i>selectboard support letter master plan.pdf</i>

5. Capacity Building – Cost Estimate

5.11

Cost estimate or proposal from consultant(s) and/or professional services provider(s). (If Technical Assistance project, applicant may attach their own cost estimates tied to the scope of services.)

6. Planning & Zoning – Location Map

6.3

Map or conceptual design outlining planned district or project area.

zoning map of Leverett.pdf

6. Planning & Zoning – Cost Estimate

6.7

Cost estimate or proposal from consultant(s) and/or professional services provider(s).

Draft Scope and Fee Leverett Innes.pdf

13. Certification – Public Entity

13.2

If applicable, certified copy of the vote taken by the relevant entity.

13. Certification – Non-Public Entity

13.4

If applicable, a document demonstrating authorization.

Other / Optional

Applicants may submit other attachments to support the application, which may be reviewed and/or filed. However, please note that these items will generally not be scored or assessed as part of the formal evaluation of the proposal.

Attachment Type

Description

Other Site Images

Other site photographs, illustrations, and/or maps. (If Technical Assistance project, attach a site map delineating the specific downtown or commercial target area.)

Other Partner Letters

Letters from any partner organizations that are collaborating on this project.

planning board support master plan.pdf

Other Support Letters

General support letters.

SEC support letter.pdf