

# Summary and Narrative

## Section 1: APPLICANT INFORMATION

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### 1.1 Type of Application:

Is this an application from a group of municipalities (consortium) or an application from a single municipality?

Single Municipality Application

Consortium Application

### 1.2 Applicant Municipality:

*Town of Charlotte*

### 1.3 Rural Town Status:

Is the municipality a rural town? ("[Rural towns](#)" with a population less than 2,500)

Yes

No

### 1.4 Agent Status:

Will the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) serve as agent for this rural town project?

Yes

No

## Section 2: PROJECT DESCRIPTION & LOCATION

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### 2.1 Please identify the project type:

*Municipal Plan\**

### 2.2 Project Title:

Name the project as concisely as possible.

The project title will be used in the grant agreement and program announcements if this grant is funded. (80 character limit)

*(Examples: Unified Bylaw Update, Village Revitalization Plan, Sewer Line Mapping)*

*Charlotte Town Plan Update for 2026\**

### 2.3 Project Subtitle:

Provide a very brief summary of what the project will accomplish and produce.

This description will be used in MPG program marketing materials if this grant is funded. See the list of [FY24 Funded Projects](#) for examples.

*(There will be opportunities to provide more detail later in the application)*

*Charlotte will update its Town Plan, to incorporate key statutory requirements, community attitudes towards development of the East/West Villages, and outline clearer policy goals that reflect our communities values.\**

### 2.4 Project Description:

Provide an overall summary of the following:

1. **Issue,**
2. **Approach to solving the problem,**
3. **Project Deliverables, and**
4. **Intended long-term outcomes.**

*(Consider writing this summary last, since it draws on more detailed responses below.)*

*In 2024, the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission conducted an audit of the Charlotte's Town Plan and identified several key items that will need to be addressed. Of note, the Town will need to (1) incorporate a policy on the extraction of earth resources as required under 24 V.S.A. §4302(c)(10); (2) include an evaluation of how renewable energy, distribution, transmission, energy efficiency in buildings, transportation and land use impact equity per Act 174; (3) incorporate language on the equitable distribution of environmental benefits and burdens as described in 3 V.S.A. Chapter 72, which is Vermont's Environmental Justice Law (Act 154 of 2022); (4) update existing wildlife habitat area, and identify core areas and linkages, as required by Act 171; (5) incorporate updated housing goals that "meet the needs of a diversity of social and income groups" as outlined in the HOME Act under 24 V.S.A. § 4382(a)(10), and; (6) amend sections of the Town Plan to show how the municipal housing target will be accommodated under Act 181, this will also include an update to Charlotte's Future Land Use Map.\**

**2.5 Project Location:**

Describe the geographic area(s) the project will address.

*(Briefly describe the project's area of focus, such as: entire town, watershed, planning area, zoning district(s), a specific site, etc. For projects not defined by municipal or state designation boundaries, ATTACH any available images in the online Attachments Form to illustrate the project location, such as a map or photo that helps reviewers become familiar with the project's location and conditions.)*

*The Town of Charlotte\**

**Section 3: PLANNING STATUS ELIGIBILITY****3.1 Municipal Plan Status:**

Does the municipality have an adopted Municipal Plan?

Yes (enter adoption date in box below)

No

*03/06/2018 Please enter the adoption date. (mm/dd/yyyy)*

**3.2 Confirmation Status:**

Does the municipality have a local planning process confirmed by the Regional Planning Commission (RPC)?

Yes

No

**Section 4: PROJECT READINESS & NEED****4.1 Project Issue & Urgency:**

What timely community issue(s), problem(s), challenge(s), or obstacle(s) will the project address?

*Charlotte's Town Plan was approved in 2018, and is set to expire in 2026.*

*In addition, the Town is in the process of completing a finalizing the East/West Villages Planning project, funded by an ACCD FY 23 Bylaw Modernization Grant (\$17,000) with additional support from the Chittenden Regional Planning Commission (\$68,000), in an effort to better understand community attitudes toward future development patterns in the town's historic West Village and East Village centers (both designated as Village Centers by ACCD). As part of this project, CCRPC staff will provide draft zoning bylaw updates to possibly correct current disparities between those rules (including 5-acre residential minimum density in the village centers) and the 'smart growth' concepts embedded in the 2016 Town Plan. Much of the public engagement that was conducted through this work will also help inform*

*Assuming some (or all) of these bylaw revisions are adopted, it would be timely to revise the Town Plan in 2026 to better reflect the town's clarified vision and values for what it wishes to preserve, what policy changes are needed, and how the town's regulatory framework and infrastructure should develop to foster the scope and pace of growth that is accepted by Charlotte residents. It will include specific sections that lay out planning goals and objectives for each district in town that clearly align with the revised bylaws. It will also update now out-of-date demographic energy and land use data from the 2018 Town Plan. With assistance from a skilled planning consultant, the updated 2026 Town Plan will provide specific, actionable guidance for town staff, the Planning Commission, and the Development Review Board to guide the town's evolution from a rural farming community to meet the emerging needs of residents for more diverse housing options, enhanced community resources, and a more diverse economic base, and to better meet the challenges of a rapidly changing climate.*

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**4.2 Funding Need:**

What other funding sources, if any, were considered, and why is the MPG program the best source to fund this project?

*In conjunction with this application to the Municipal Planning Grant Program, the Town has requested additional staffing from the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission to assist the Planning Commission with drafting updates to the Town Plan that ensure our compliance with State and Regional requirements.*

*While the town has a professional planner on staff, s/he has many other duties that preclude him/her from providing the exclusive attention and focus this project will require, and can't complete a significant plan update alone. Also, the town plan update will provide an essential policy basis for anticipated future funding applications for myriad potential infrastructure planning projects (community wastewater and water systems, transportation and streetscape improvements) that are critical to the town's ability to accommodate more concentrated 'smart growth' development in the vicinity of the two village centers.\**

**4.3(a) Municipal Plan Project Readiness:**

If the application is for a municipal plan adoption or amendment project, how will the project address the issues described earlier and any recommendations made by the RPC to bring the municipal plan into compliance with statutory requirements?

Not a Municipal Plan project

*At the Planning Commission's request, a senior planner at CCRPC wrote an August 2022 memo that provided a detailed set of recommendations for extensive rewrites of the town's zoning bylaws to enable 'smart growth' development. While these reforms focus on development rules within the two designated village centers, they also address the need for town-wide bylaw reforms to remove barriers to building more housing, and to steer appropriate development away from the town's rural district, where 90% of new development has occurred over the past 25 years.*

*Revised bylaws will drive revisions to a Town Plan that articulates the vision and specific goals for each zoning district (including the two villages), reflecting feedback gathered during the village planning outreach & stakeholder engagement processes.*

#### **4.3(b) Municipal Plan Implementation Project Readiness:**

If the application is for a project that implements the municipal plan, how is the proposed project identified as an important implementation action in the adopted municipal plan?

Not an implementation project

*In addition to the extensive public outreach and engagement and visioning work being completed under the auspices of the Village Master Plan project described in Sec. 4.1 above, development of a revised Plan provides an opportunity to address other pressing community challenges that have arisen in recent years, including (among others) how the town should structure and pay for emergency services, expand our tax base, increase economic opportunity, and meet the needs of an aging population.*

#### **4.4 Other Background**

Are there any additional community efforts or activities leading up to this application that would provide extra context for this project? (Optional)

*If funded, this project will provide logical and functional continuity to the Bylaw Modernization grant the town received in early 2023, using resident ideas and preferences, expressed in the Village Master Planning project described above. It will tie adoption of bylaw reforms with re-alignment of Town Plan goals and objectives to inform continuous improvement of the town's planning and permitting processes, to more effectively meet the community's evolving interests.*

#### **4.5 Project Overlap**

If a municipality received an MPG last year - or the project is a part of a larger or phased project, explain how the project relates and the capacity to complete the proposed project.

N/A (single project with no overlap)

#### **4.6 Project Management**

How will the project and consultant be managed and who will make decisions about the project and final products? Please identify one or two individuals in the community who will lead the project (*for example: the Planning Commission Chair*). *Charlotte's Town Planner will draft a Scope of Work outlining required timeframe, benchmarks and deliverable work products to solicit bids from consultants. The Scope of Work will be reviewed & approved by the Planning Commission, who will interview candidates who submit bids & agree on a recommendation to hire. Once the project is contracted, Planning Commission members will be involved in community meetings to solicit public views on drafts, direct other public outreach, and review section drafts as produced, providing feedback and suggesting additional detail or edits as needed. They will also advise the Town Planner (project lead for the town) on monitoring work product quality, and reviewing final drafts prior to submitting the plan for public hearings, and submittal to town voters for adoption at Town Meeting in 2026.\**

## **Section 5: COMMUNITY SUPPORT & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

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### **5.1 Public Outreach:**

What participation methods will the project use to engage the participation of the broader public, especially commonly under-served and under-represented populations in the community?

*This work will benefit from comprehensive stakeholder outreach & engagement that will be initiated and carried out under the Village Master Plan project. That effort will reach deep within Charlotte's civic infrastructure (i.e. outside of elected and appointed town board members) to engage with groups that may have been missing from long-range planning discussions.*

*Resident views will be solicited through community meetings, a design charette, surveys, focus groups and other forums to develop and articulate a shared vision of what they wish to retain, evolve and to change in the town's future. Outreach scope will include engagement with faith communities, voluntary groups, BIPOC organizations and groups reflecting a broad cross-section of residents of all ages, social strata and interests.*

*We will build upon this foundation from the prior village master planning project throughout 2025. An extensive outreach plan, building on the public engagement to be conducted through the town's Village Master Plan project, will be developed and launched to inform and engage residents with Plan development, as it unfolds. Multiple communication channels (including surveys, articles in local media, and local forums) will be deployed to test and present the Plan vision, goals and policies for each new draft section before it is discussed & incorporated into the working draft.\**

**5.2 Project Partnership & Support:**

In addition to the Selectboard and Planning Commission's resolution of support, please explain and provide evidence of organizational partnership and community support for the project.

*(Applicants may **attach** up to five pages as a single document in the Application Attachments Form, including: letters of support, meeting minutes, or other documents showing community support for the project.)*

*Staff at the Chittenden Regional Planning Commission are deeply engaged and supportive of the current Village Master Plan project, and have committed substantial staff time and additional planning funds (see Sec. 4.1 response above) in their work plan for 2023-25 (including follow-up grant applications for feasibility studies and engineering designs for community water and wastewater systems if those emerge as priorities from the current project).*

*Members of the town's Development Review Board, Town Energy Committee and Conservation Commission have also committed to ongoing involvement in this work, contributing ideas and direction to framing a substantially revised 2026 Town Plan. It's also likely that current town discussions on bringing volunteer fire & rescue services into town government will figure into development of the community facilities and services section of the Plan.\**

**Section 6: STATEWIDE PROPERTIES****6.1 Project Outcomes & Goals:**

Beyond the project itself, what long-term outcomes would demonstrate the success of the project and further the statewide planning goals?

*A revised Town Plan along the lines outlined above will enable the town's progress towards 'smart growth' objectives, which are a core theme of statewide planning goals. It will create specific, actionable and measurable objectives for the town to enhance needed infrastructure, reduce regulatory uncertainty, and steer developers and property owners to propose development that will be in alignment with the town's articulated vision for its preferred future, as articulated in this Plan.\**

**6.2 Priority Project Categories:**

Which of the following statewide priorities does this project address. (select all that apply)

Projects focused on the implementation of the Act 47 of 2023 and Act 181 of 2024

Projects related to climate resilience and flood recovery

Projects related to housing development

Capital programs and plans for municipal improvements

Physical improvement plans for a designated area, which may include pre-engineering water/wastewater visioning

Pre-requisite planning to prepare for a center or center 'step-up' designation application

Projects that support communities for all ages and help implement Age Strong Vermont: A Roadmap for an Age-friendly State

Innovative and statewide projects that serve as a replicable model for other communities

Not Applicable (N/A) - Project is a local priority

**6.3 Priority Project Explanation:**

Explain how the project furthers the selected statewide priority(s).

• *Housing-related projects: We expect the draft town plan will spell out specific goals and objectives to reinforce and implement policies to advance the construction of workforce housing, senior housing and permanently affordable housing to enable Charlotte to do its share in meeting regional housing goals*

• *Age-friendly plans for 'age-strong' community design focused on children and seniors: We expect the draft town plan will identify specific plans for enhanced access to community services and infrastructure to serve age-diverse individuals of all abilities in Charlotte, with respect to transportation, social supports, and health care. We will also incorporate a strengths-based approach to reach and include currently under-represented individuals and groups in community planning conversations, including local BIPOC community members, younger residents with families, youth, and new Americans living in Charlotte.*

**6.4 Designated Areas:**

Which of the following state designations are held by the municipality, select all that apply?

Village Center

Downtown

New Town Center

Neighborhood Development Area

Growth Center

N/A

**6.5 Designated Area Projects:**

If the project relates to any of the designated area(s) selected above, please explain.

In 2021, ACCD approved the town's application for Village Center designation for Charlotte's historic East and West Villages. A principal focus of the current Village Master Plan project is to identify and remove regulatory barriers to building more diverse housing types in these village centers.

If funded, this project will better align the next Town Plan with this new regulatory framework. It will also lay the groundwork and build community consensus for long-term non-regulatory outcomes, including infrastructure planning, economic development, and transportation alternatives to the exclusive use of private automobiles to meet residents' mobility needs.

## Section 7: PAST PERFORMANCE

### 7.1 Project History and Performance:

Please list any planning projects, or grants, from the past-5-years, with key actions identified and implemented. (will inform ongoing status of projects beyond grant closeout)

Charlotte was awarded a \$17,000 FY23 Bylaw Modernization Grant by ACCD in late 2022. Although now part of the expanded Village Master Plan project, the BMG's scope will remain on revising bylaws to enable permitting of more housing and commercial activity in the village centers.

The FY 2024 UPWP's work products will include: preparing & presenting conceptual village plans, street designs, photo stimulations and 3D renderings of desired village densities; preparing zoning bylaw amendments to enable those plans; and preparing and launching a community outreach campaign to educate residents about the benefits of adopting the bylaw changes as proposed.

As a follow-up effort to the BMG project, CCRPC staff are committed to assist the town in applying for anticipated engineering feasibility studies and planning grants to construct community water supply and wastewater systems for the village centers, if that infrastructure is required to achieve the planning objectives that appear likely to emerge from the revised Plan.\*

## Section 8: MUNICIPAL RESOLUTION, GRANT ROLES, and GOOD STANDING CERTIFICATION

Please print and complete the [Municipal Resolution form offline](#). Click the embedded link for more information about the responsibilities and permissions of the [MPG Roles](#)

If this is a consortium application, each partner municipality must complete a resolution designating the same Municipal/Authorizing Official and Administrator. **You can upload the additional consortium resolutions in the Application Attachments form.**

**\*Please note that the Municipal / Authorizing Official (M/AO) role can only be attached to this application by program staff. Please contact DHCD staff at [jennifer.lavoie@vermont.gov](mailto:jennifer.lavoie@vermont.gov) or 802.828.1948 for assistance.**

8.1 Please indicate the following roles that correspond to the roles identified in the Municipal Resolution Form.

### Municipal/Authorizing Official (M/AO):

Nathaniel Bareham\*

M/AO Title

Town Administrator

### Alternate Municipal/Authorizing Official (M/AO):

Alt M/AO Title

### Grant Administrator:

Nathaniel Bareham

Grant Admin Title

Town Administrator

## Upload Completed Municipal Resolution

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Emailed to DHCD

**8.2 Good Standing Certification:** (*click for form*) Municipal Planning Grants are a State-funded grant program. Applicant hereby represents: (1.) that it has signed and provided to the State the form prescribed by the Secretary of Administration for purposes of certifying that it is in good standing (as provided in Section 13(a)(2) of Act 154) with the Agency of Natural Resources and the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, or otherwise explaining the circumstances surrounding the inability to so certify, and (2.) that it will comply with the requirements stated therein.

## Upload Certification of Good Standing

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