

Memo

To: Williston Selectboard
From: Matt Boulanger, Director of Planning
Cc: Erik Wells, Town Manager
Date: November 11, 2022
Re: FY24 Municipal Planning Grant
Town Plan Update Public Engagement



OVERVIEW

This memorandum requests that the Selectboard sign a resolution applying for a Municipal Planning Grant (MPG) to assist the Town in its efforts to ensure that the 2025 Williston Comprehensive Plan ("Town Plan") will be based on a solid foundation of broad, robust public engagement. The engagement effort funded by the MPG will incorporate the collective input of Williston's citizens, including historically marginalized groups, to leverage opportunities and address the Town's current and future challenges.

Much has happened since the current Town Plan was adopted in 2017. As Williston has made great progress in implementing the action items of the 2017 Plan, critical issues including housing affordability, racial equity, public health, and climate change have risen to the forefront. The rising prominence of new issues and the town's progress on its existing goals call for a renewed approach to planning Williston's future. Broad and deep public engagement on the new Plan is critical to ensuring that the Plan and the action items the town takes following its adoption are truly based on informed public involvement in the decision-making and prioritization process.

PROJECT SCOPE

The comprehensive planning process will be more effective and enduring when it engages a broader cross section of the community and harnesses the collective creative resources of our citizens. This project will develop Williston's 2025 Town Plan through an innovative, robust public engagement process. We propose to pursue MPG funding so we can work with a consultant team to conduct engagement that includes a broad array of methods such as in-person/virtual events, an interactive website, mailed/online/phone surveys, activities with school classes and popup engagement at community events.

FUNDING

The grant requires a 10% local match minimum. Projects proposing a higher match are given priority. We are proposing a 18% match. The grant request is for \$26,400 and the town's match is \$5,600 for a total proposed budget of \$32,000. The match will be funded in FY2024 through the Planning Department's "Professional Services" and/or "Miscellaneous Planning Studies" budget line items.

PROCEDURE

For the grant application to be valid and complete, a majority of the Selectboard must sign the attached resolution to designate the authorizing officials (M/AO) to act on behalf of the municipality. The grant application process requires the Selectboard to approve of the application, including the 10% match requirement, and designate by resolution someone to serve as the Municipal/Authorizing Official (MAO). The MAO can be the Town Manager and the Selectboard chair can serve as the MAO alternate. The MAO is authorized to sign grant documents, to electronically submit for requisitions if a grant is awarded, and to assign a grant Administrator.

Recommended Motion:

I _____ move that the Williston Selectboard approve and sign a resolution designating the Town Manager and Selectboard Chair as the authorizing officials for the purpose of applying for and administering a Municipal Planning Grant for the Williston 2025 Comprehensive Plan project.