



## Application Form

### 1. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Project name: Hingham Harbor and Downtown Sustainable Vision Study

Lead Municipality: Town of Hingham

Municipal Staff Project Manager: Mary Savage-Dunham, AICP, CFM

Project Manager Title: Director of Community Planning

This is the person who will be the day-to-day contact for the project and who will represent the municipality in regular communication with MAPC.

**\_\_\_\_ Please attach a signed authorization from the Chief Executive Officer identifying the individual named above.**

Address:

Town of Hingham

210 Central Street

Hingham, MA 02043

Phone Number: O: (781) 741-1419, C: (781) 561-6304

Email address: dunhamm@hingham-ma.gov

Project Partner(s)

Name of Partner Municipalities, Non-Profits, and/or Community-Based Organization:

Downtown Association, Harbor Development Commission, Historical and Historic District Commissions, Trustees of the Bathing Beach, and South Shore Chamber of Commerce

Point of Contact, Name and Title:

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list additional partners in Section 3 Project Description.



## 2. PROJECT DETAILS

Type of Grant

Technical Assistance/Design Grant

Capital Project

Capacity Building

Grant Duration

One-Year Grant

Two-Year Grant

Grant Amount Request (per year, if a two-year request):

\$15,000

Location/Address of the Project (if applicable):

Hingham Harbor/Downtown

Which climate risk(s) does the proposal address?

Sea Level Rise

Extreme Heat or Urban Heat Island Impacts

Flooding

Extreme Weather Events/ Other Climate Impacts

1. Describe how the project improves community or cross-jurisdictional climate resiliency targeting urban heat island and extreme heat, inland flooding/stormwater management, or sea level rise and coastal flooding?
2. Describe how the proposed project complies with the program priorities and addresses one or more of the criteria for evaluation.



3. Using the Climate Vulnerability Indicators in Figure 1, please describe how the project will directly benefit socially vulnerable population and climate justice.
4. Describe the public support, political will, and staff capacity to implement this project? Describe your public engagement, communications, and outreach plan.
5. Who will comprise the project team? Describe the roles of each member of the team including partners. Will the hiring of consultant or vendors be required, and if so, what type and to perform which tasks? Name the consultant or vendor if known.
6. FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND/OR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS. Please complete Appendix B Permitting and Regulatory Approval for Construction Projects. Please describe contingency plan for permitting and/or construction delays.

### 3. PROJECT BUDGET AND TIMELINE

In no more than two pages, please provide:

1. A detailed timeline for completing the project, including milestones at six months. Describe the mechanism for completion within a 12-month or 24-month period.
2. A detailed budget for the project. Matching funds are not required for this grant. However, the proposal should describe the staff and other personnel time committed to the project, and how this project could leverage additional local, state, or federal funding

### 3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Town of Hingham is developing a Hingham Harbor and Downtown Sustainable Vision and District Plan with the intent of creating an overall conceptual plan and strategic action plan to guide public realm improvements, district land use, resilience and sustainability, and other complementary district improvements. To advance this plan the Town applied for and received a planning assistance grant from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council and is seeking complementary grant funding to enhance the study. The Project Work Plan is based on a budget of \$28,000 (\$25,000 MAPC Technical Assistance and \$3,000 Town of Hingham). The additional \$15,000 would bring the total project budget to \$43,000 and would support the expansion of resilience recommendations for the district through further exploration of adaptation, green infrastructure, and resilient zoning recommendations for the district.

The overall goal of the project is to create a shared vision for the district and define short and long-term recommendations that will help the district to evolve toward that vision and to achieve the goals articulated through this process. The district plan will be developed through a public process engaging the community's residents, business owners, property owners and leadership and will be built upon research, analysis and community involvement. The study will generate recommendations that are focused on:

- District public realm and open space improvements
- District resiliency and sustainability improvements
- District land use and zoning recommendations

For the purposes of this study, the Hingham Harbor area extends from western extent at the intersection of Otis Street and Broad Cove Road then runs east along Route 3A and the waterfront harbor edge to its eastern extent at Steamboat Wharf near Steamboat Lane. The Downtown area encompasses the adjacent commercial district that extends from the Rotary on Route 3A to the southwest to Hingham Square. This includes a northern boundary of Route 3A; an eastern boundary of Green Street, the rail corridor, South Street, Main Street, and Elm Street; a southern boundary of Central Street, South Street to Lafayette Lane, and Central Street to North Street; and a western boundary of North Street back to Route 3A. The study area includes the "Old Ordinary" house owned by Hingham Historic and the Benjamin Lincoln House being purchased by the town. The Downtown area includes commercial parcels on both sides of several of these streets forming the district boundary. This area includes both Hingham Square and Downtown. Note that the Study Area is larger than the parcels within the combined downtown zoning Business A/Downtown Hingham Overlay districts and Waterfront Business/Official and Open Space/Hingham Harbor Overlay districts.

1. Do you have a climate vulnerability assessment, coastal vulnerability assessment or a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan? If yes, describe how the project advances implementation of that plan. If no, describe how this project will advance knowledge of your community's vulnerability to climate change.

The Town of Hingham has several studies that form the planning context for this study. The primary source is the area's previous master plan, Master Plan for Hingham Harbor, 2007. This plan needs to be revisited and updated. Implementation progress has been made based on the recommendations of this previous plan. A new bathhouse and concession stand is under construction at this time and was a part of the previous recommendations. The Town used Community Preservation Act funds to construct the Whitney Wharf Bridge to provide pedestrian connection set back from Route 3A, improving pedestrian access along the harbor as previously recommended. Benches and historic signage have enhanced the use of the harbor area as previously recommended. However, the pedestrian environment along the harbor remains variable and feels unsafe in specific locations due to inadequate sidewalks, proximity to fast moving vehicles and overall high traffic volumes. Additionally, Community Rowing prepared a study for the Hingham Harbor area titled Hingham Harbor Waterfront Improvements, 2013.

The Town also worked with Kleinfelder on a sea level rise analysis to identify the vulnerability of town assets along the Harbor. This study is titled Climate Change Vulnerability, Risk Assessment and Adaptation Study, 2015. The Town has implemented recommendations from this study to increase the resiliency of the harbor including installing a buried wall and planted dunes to protect the parking lot at the Bathing Beach, and seeks to secure funds to raise three of the town-owned wharves.

A MassDOT Road Safety Audit was performed on Summer Street and more recently a "Road Diet" analysis was completed with a focus on the rotary and traffic calming on Summer Street. This project, which includes bike lanes, walking paths and lane reductions, is on the 2024 TIP. Unfortunately, the Road Diet did not drill down to identify opportunities to ensure safe pedestrian crossings to better connect the Downtown and the Harbor and this study would help to address those considerations.

2. Describe how the project improves community or cross-jurisdictional climate resiliency targeting urban heat island and extreme heat, inland flooding/stormwater management, or sea level rise and coastal flooding? Hingham Harbor and Downtown are at risk for coastal flooding and sea level rise. A district plan is a powerful tool to set the direction for investment and improvements with the many stakeholders involved. In order to both advance the economic vitality, sustainability, and resilience of the district, the following project outcomes will be the focus of this planning effort:

- Updated resilience assessment - a data-driven analysis of the challenges of the district and specific locations of risk will be foundational to defining recommendations in the district.
- Solutions with synergy identified - improvements that can address several district needs simultaneously will be prioritized.
- Shared interests supported - the planning process will seek to identify solutions that will benefit multiple stakeholders in the district. The shared interests and specific actions will be identified with actions that can be supported by shared responsibilities.
- Project champions enabled - through the planning process, stakeholders who are well positioned to advance recommendations will be identified and enabled to carry forward recommendations that will benefit the district.

3. Describe how the proposed project complies with the program priorities and addresses one or more of the criteria for evaluation.

The proposed study will accelerate climate change preparedness and resilience for Hingham Harbor and downtown. The study will be exploring reducing coastal flooding and sea level rise risks through coastal adaptation strategies that will include exploring nature-based solutions, green infrastructure, and the potential for climate smart parks or adaptations for existing parks that would integrate resilience features into the village fabric of the district. The study will also guide municipal climate resiliency policy by exploring zoning recommendations to improve district resilience and sustainability through future development investments. The process will also be seeking to build climate change capacity through the many stakeholders and groups with a shared interest in Hingham Harbor and downtown. The process will be convening these stakeholders to engage in this process and will hopefully build a more open and collaborative partnership to implement study recommendations. The recommendations will be developed and considered at the district-scale and could provide additional models for coastal district resilience planning that MAPC has been leading in nearby South Shore municipalities, such as Duxbury and Scituate. Lastly, the resilience recommendations are being approached to seek solutions that form synergy with other district needs. For example, the district needs for improved walkability and safe pedestrian connections can be integrated with green infrastructure investments or the need for attractive outdoor gathering spaces in the district could be integrated with a climate smart park adaptation.

4. Using the Climate Vulnerability Indicators in Figure 1, please describe how the project will directly benefit socially vulnerable population and climate justice.

As defined by MAPC's Vulnerability Map, in Hingham (Census Tract 5011.02) the vulnerability to extreme heat and flood is listed as extremely low. However, the study indirectly aligns with several of the Climate Vulnerability Indicators that have been identified. The district falls within the flood risk area delineated by FEMA Flood Zones and these areas will see an increased risk with projected sea level rise. The neighborhoods immediately adjacent to the study area include residents aged 65 and

up. The Harbor and Downtown district need to safely welcome residents and visitors of all ages including those aged 5 or below and 65 and up. Finally, the flood risks impact Route 3A crossing through the Study Area. Route 3A is a roadway that provides a major corridor for mobility of all populations in the South Shore including other potentially vulnerable populations in nearby communities. While the Town of Hingham does not have direct control over the roadway, it can influence adaptation of the roadway to reduce flood risks to this important mobility feature.

5. Describe the public support, political will, and staff capacity to implement this project? Describe your public engagement, communications, and outreach plan.

In addition to residents and downtown merchants other key stakeholders include the Downtown Association, the Harbor Development Commission, the Historical and Historic District Commissions, the Trustees of the Bathing Beach, the Conservation Commission, the Harbormaster, the Planning Board, Development and Industrial Commission, and the Master Plan Committee. Engaging all the Boards and Committees with care, control or regulatory authority over the study area in this analysis will be beneficial in that it will increase collaboration and mutual understanding, and perhaps could result in the framework for an annual roundtable meeting of these Boards about the "state of the district". The Downtown Association wants the Square and Downtown to provide a more experiential visit while also having a diversity of businesses that attract and appeal to all ages. The South Shore Chamber of Commerce is a partner with the Town now and the process would benefit from their involvement. The town will help to coordinate the involvement of each of these stakeholder groups, Boards, and Committees. The town will also provide a town webpage for the project to upload information and promote events.

The Town of Hingham has committed \$3,000 to support the Project Work Plan.

6. Who will comprise the project team? Describe the roles of each member of the team including partners. Will the hiring of consultant or vendors be required, and if so, what type and to perform which tasks? Name the consultant or vendor if known.

MAPC will lead and manage the study process and the technical planning components outlined in the Project Work Plan. MPAC will provide coordination and communication with the Town of Hingham and provide requests to the Town with sufficient notice to perform the tasks that may be required as this process progresses.

The Town of Hingham's effort will be lead and coordinated by Mary Savage-Dunham, Director of Community Planning. Town staff and members of relevant elected and appointed Boards and Committees will be included in the process through the convening of a project meetings that will include members of the Harbor Development Committee, the Downtown Association, the Planning Board, the Route 3A Task Force, the Conservation Commission, the Historical and Historic Districts Commissions, the Harbormaster, and the Trustees of the Bathing Beach. Assistance in ensuring the involvement of

these stakeholders and others will be provided by Mary Savage-Dunham to provide guidance for the project over the course of several meetings throughout the study's planning process. The town will also be responsible for internal communication and coordination between Town Departments, Boards, and Committees, collection of relevant data, previous studies and information, assistance with direct outreach, promotion and communication of project events to the community and staffing, support and facilitation assistance at project meetings or events.

7. FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND/OR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS. Please complete Appendix B Permitting and Regulatory Approval for Construction Projects. Please describe contingency plan for permitting and/or construction delays.

Not applicable to the proposed project.

#### 4. PROJECT BUDGET AND TIMELINE

In no more than two pages, please provide:

1. A detailed timeline for completing the project, including milestones at six months. Describe the mechanism for completion within a 12-month or 24-month period.

See outline below.

2. A detailed budget for the project. Matching funds are not required for this grant. However, the proposal should describe the staff and other personnel time committed to the project, and how this project could leverage additional local, state, or federal funding

See outline below.

##### **Task 1 - District Vision**

A district vision will be created and articulated through engagement with the Working Group, other key stakeholders and the community involvement. An overall vision statement and goals for the district will be defined and refined based this engagement. A memorandum that documents and summarizes the goals and interests of key stakeholders and identifies the shared goals and interests of the district will be created as the deliverable for this task.

Community engagement is an important component of this task. The intent of the process is to build a vision for future land uses in the Harbor and Downtown area, streetscape and landscape improvements, and wayfinding and connections to tie the entire district together. Each of these recommendations should combine in a cohesive manner to support amenity for residents, anchor for regional historic tourism, and recreation and shopping destination for visitors.

These district visioning conversations will be supported by data and analysis provided by Task 2. The timeline for this work will require completion of some of the initial analysis of Task 2. The task is outlined below based on the funding currently provided for the project. Additional virtual stakeholder meetings would be beneficial if additional funding through complementary grants is secured. These additional scope items are outlined below.

**This work has been adequately funded with other funding sources.**

##### **Task 2 - District Public Realm and Open Space Improvement and Resiliency Plan**

The Downtown and Harbor area presents both opportunities and challenges. Walkability and accessibility to the harbor and downtown must be improved. Perhaps the largest challenge is forming a plan on how to connect Hingham Square, the Downtown and the Harbor so that it feels like one walkable district for visitors. Identifying opportunities to help pedestrians cross Route 3A instead of perceiving it as a barrier is critical. Connecting the Harbor and Downtown to the Shipyard is a goal designed to open up regional employment, economic development and tourism opportunities. Another challenge is the piecemeal installation of landscape improvements (signage, wayfinding, access, benches, lighting, walkways, plantings) that may not all be resilient or sustainable and do not coordinate or match in style or design.

The district public realm and open space improvement and resiliency plan will incorporate these opportunities and challenges and respond to the district vision that is articulated through Task 1. A plan for the district's public realm and open space improvements could help tie the Harbor and Downtown together through wayfinding signage and design features, and also identify opportunities for pocket parks or other improvements to the pedestrian experience. In addition, a coordinated plan will help to advance climate resiliency measures to ensure the sustainable protection of the harbor for years to come.

The district public realm and open space plan will incorporate the following elements:

- Existing conditions analysis of the district with existing public realm components including sidewalks, crosswalks, street trees, open spaces, resilience features, wayfinding, monuments, other other items.
- Updated resilience assessment based on current sea level rise projections
- Unified vision for public realm improvements including pocket parks, signage, walkways, benches and other open space improvements.
- Identification of other ways to improve walkability and accessibility between the commercial district and the Harbor. The recommendations will be developed based on the proposed improvements to Route 3A on the 2024 TIP.
- Update to resiliency risks and concepts included in the 2015 Kleinfelder plan.

**Task 2 - Meetings:** (1) Virtual Public Realm, Open Space and Resilience Challenges Meeting, (1) Virtual Presentation of Public Realm, Open Space and Resilience Strategies Meeting

**Task 2 - Deliverables/Products**

Memorandum outlining district public realm, open space, and resiliency improvements

**Task 2 - Budget**

\$10,000

**Task 2 - Timeline**

About 3-4 months

**Task 3 - District Land Use and Zoning Recommendations**

The overall vision articulated for the district in Task 1 will be further detailed with a vision for land use in the study area based on the current zoning and potential zoning changes. The recommendations will be based on community input in order to activate the study area and an analysis of any potential benefits to be gained from creation of a cultural district, or other district management entities. Finally, a challenge and opportunity is to build a vision for a unified Harbor and Downtown that identifies opportunities for activation through potential new uses for the Harbor and a diverse mix of businesses that would attract visitors. This could include creating a cultural district, identifying a series of walkways and destinations to draw visitors to explore the harbor and the Downtown, or showcasing the historic streetscapes and unique connections to create a "sense of place" which is essential to visitor enjoyment of the Harbor and Downtown. All efforts should be combined to increase the likelihood of repeat visits to the district. Connecting this activated district through transit to the region would benefit both the town and the South Shore and any analysis should identify strategies and opportunities

for the Town to capitalize on improved connections to transit moving forward. We would also benefit from guidance on potential marketing to raise awareness of the district and to draw visitors from Boston via the Shipyard.

**Task 3 - Meetings:** (1) Land Use and Zoning Presentation Meeting

**Task 3 - Deliverables/Products**

Memorandum outlining district land use and zoning recommendations

**Task 3 - Budget**

\$5,000

**Task 3 - Timeline**

About 3-4 months following Task 1

The expected timeframe is: May 15, 2020 to May 15, 2021