



TOWN OF GRAFTON
GRAFTON MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER
30 PROVIDENCE ROAD
GRAFTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01519
(508) 839-5335 ext. 1120 • FAX (508) 839-4602
planningdept@grafton-ma.gov
www.grafton-ma.gov

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Town of Grafton Planning Board
FROM: Fiona Coughlan, Town Planner
CC: Natalia Alward, Planning Assistant (via email)
DATE: January 18, 2023
SUBJECT: Master Plan Update and Recommendations

This memorandum has been prepared as part of the meeting materials for the January 23, 2023, Planning Board meeting. It serves as a status update for the Board regarding progress on the Master Plan and recommendations to address Phase II. The Planning Department is coordinating with the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) on this effort.

STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Town Planner has been in discussions with CMRPC over the past two weeks on the status of the Phase II and Phase III contract, now that Phase I is officially closed. The price for Phase III has increased by \$30,000 (from \$20,000 to \$50,000) since the original price proposal submission in January 2022. Considering this, the Planner has agreed to apply for an EEA grant in conjunction with CMRPC to cover the additional cost. The application period opens in April and closes in May. CMRPC has an excellent record of receiving EEA grants for their communities' Master Plans. The grant award is up to \$50,000 and requires a Town match of \$12,500 (25 percent).

The Planning Department notified the Assistant Town Administrator that they will be requesting funding to cover the grant match and the remainder of Phase II and Phase III at May Town Meeting (\$72,500). There is currently \$20,000 remaining from last year's Town Meeting and \$20,000 available in the FY 2024 Operating Budget for the Master Plan. CMRPC is revising their contract to account for these changes and sending an update for signature as soon as possible. CMRPC and the Town Planner discussed that upon contract signing, we may proceed with Phase II work up to \$40,000. Recommendations to proceed include working with CMRPC to draft and launch the community survey, soliciting input on the prior Master Plan's *Vision and Goals* and to identify needs, preferences, and opportunities for the Plan's chapters.

The Planning Board should take this opportunity to gather input on the relevance of unmet implementation items from the previous Plan, which will also strengthen the new *Vision and Goals*. It is recommended that the Board, with the assistance of the Town Planner, pursue the following:

- Brainstorm Vision Statement and Chapter Goals language based on current priorities;
- Evaluate survey question options to address with CMRPC, using data gathered in Phase I;
- Assess survey distribution/circulation strategies, including online and paper versions, translation needs, etc.;



TOWN OF GRAFTON
GRAFTON MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER
30 PROVIDENCE ROAD
GRAFTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01519
(508) 839-5335 ext. 1120 • FAX (508) 839-4602
planningdept@grafton-ma.gov
www.grafton-ma.gov

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

- Provide the Town Planner with suggestions for stakeholder interview attendees; and
- Confirm the desire, need, and ability to establish a Master Plan Committee to assist going forward.

Until the Phase II contract is sent to the Town of signature, it is unclear what the Board's level of commitment will be. At minimum, the Board should be available to participate in the Preliminary Kickoff Meeting with CMRPC, two public workshops, and a public meeting. The Board should also consider the design of these events, display materials, and question prompts to gather as much information as possible. These events are in addition to discussing the Master Plan at Planning Board meetings throughout the project's lifespan. More concrete details and roles/responsibilities will be finalized at the Kickoff Meeting with CMRPC.

Thank you.

Fiona Coughlan