

MassWorks Application Resources and Tips FRCOG, July 2020

The Commonwealth's MassWorks infrastructure grant program has announced its latest grant round. If your municipality intends to submit an application, it is important to carefully review the application and program guidelines as they may have changed from the previous year. As you likely know, it can be challenging for projects in rural towns to compete with more urban communities that often have bigger projects and more significant development. The following are links to resources and tips for consideration when completing the application. The goal is to make Franklin County projects as competitive as possible.

- Questions about the MassWorks program? Check their guidance and online webinar at <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massworks-infrastructure-program>.
- When describing the project in the narrative, do not forget to make the case for how this project relates to the type of development selected (i.e. mixed-use, housing, economic development, or small town road improvement) and why it is important. For example, if the project is for economic development state how the project supports business growth or job creation. If there are additional reasons why the project is important (such as public safety or more housing) include that as well.
- Think about how your community compares to other communities statewide. The MassWorks application reviewer may not be familiar with the challenges faced by rural communities. For example, many Franklin County towns do not have access to fixed route transit service or have access to a public water or wastewater system. In the application, a community that has these services could highlight it as an asset in this region. Whereas a community that does not have these services could note that it is at a disadvantage and why your project is important.
- Include a map that depicts the location of the project and how it relates to the town. If needed, ask FRCOG for assistance in creating a project map. Contact jatwood@frcog.org for more information about getting a map of the project site.
- The application asks if the project site is in a regional priority development and/or preservation area. The FRCOG's 2013 [Sustainable Franklin County: the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development](#) is a regional plan that identified priority development areas.
- The [2020 Franklin County CEDS Plan](#) and the [2020 Franklin County Transportation Plan Update](#) identify goals and recommended projects, which could be referenced to demonstrate a project's consistency with regional priorities.
- The application asks if the project is located in a [federally designated Opportunity Zone](#). In Franklin County, these areas are designated: towns of Charlemont, Colrain, Erving, Hawley, Heath, Monroe, Orange, Rowe, Warwick, Wendell, and Greenfield's Census Tracts #25011-0414 and #25011-0413, and Montague's Census Tract 25011-0407.01.
- The application asks if the project is located in a [Chapter 43D District](#). In Franklin County, the Chapter 43D sites are: Bernardston's Church St/Northfield Rd/ Industrial Dr Site, and Northfield Road Site; Gill's Mariamante site at Main and West Gill Rds; Deerfield's Oxford Site; Greenfield's Bank Row site, and 180 Laurel Street site; Montague's Strathmore Mill site and Turnpike Road Industrial Park site; and Orange's Putnam Hall Block, South Main Street Block, and West River Street Block.

- The application asks if the project is applicable to a Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) review. Information about MEPA's review threshold criteria is found in the state's 301 CMR 11.03 (or go to <https://www.mass.gov/regulations/301-CMR-11-mepa-regulations> to download the MEPA regulations and look up section *301 CMR 11.03 Review Thresholds*).
- The application asks if the project supports private development located within a ½ mile of where two or more fixed bus routes converge. In Franklin County the bus stops where two or more fixed bus routes converge are: (sources: [FRTA](#), [MRTA](#), [PVTA](#))

Deerfield Bus Stop South Deerfield Village Center

Greenfield Bus Stops: Baystate Franklin Medical Center; John W. Olver Transit Center; Greenfield Community College; Greenfield Corporate Center on Munson Street; Greenfield Gardens; Greenfield Middle School; Greenfield High School; Oak Courts; Leyden Woods.

Montague Bus Stops: Food City; Avenue A & 3rd Street; Montague & Crocker Ave; Park Villa; Industrial Blvd; Millers Falls Center

Orange Bus Stops: Orange Center; Walmart; Hannafords

Whately Bus Stop: Whately Park-and-Ride Lot

- It is helpful to include photos that are in color and clearly show the problem that the project is seeking to remedy.
- If MassWorks is one of multiple funding sources to be used for the project, clearly delineate what MassWorks funds will be used for as part of the total overall project.