



February 8, 2023

Town of Rye
10 Central Road
Rye, NH 03870

c/o Patricia Losik, Planning Board Chair
603-498-6498 | patlos@comcast.net

Dear Ms Losik,,

The Steering Committee for the InvestNH Municipal Planning & Zoning Grant Program reviewed your submission for the Housing Opportunity Planning (HOP) Grant. The purpose of this grant is to assist those municipalities looking to increase housing opportunities through community engagement and regulatory change.

I am pleased to inform you that the Steering Committee has approved your request of \$17,750 for the Town of Rye to pursue HOP Phase 1: Needs Analysis and Planning.

In addition to the monetary award, participation in Housing Academy is a key benefit of this program and is designed to help build or further develop local capacity as it relates to housing matters. To that end, and if you have not already done so, we encourage all awardees to recruit volunteer community members to participate alongside designated staff. Due to the volume of interest in Housing Academy, a second Housing Academy has been created and will begin in late April 2023. All grant recipients that received their award letters after February 1st, 2023 will be enrolled in Spring 2023 Housing Academy. Stay tuned for the schedule and registration.

At your earliest convenience, please email your acknowledgment and acceptance of this award to info@NHHOPgrants.org. Once we have received your acknowledgement, as well as a commitment letter from the consultant you plan to work with, we will follow up with a formal Grant Agreement. Note that all consultants must be on the [List of Qualified Consultants](#) found on NHHOPgrants.org. If you would like to work with a consultant who is not currently on this list, or if your community requires a competitive process, please contact us to discuss further.

Finally, in all public acknowledgments, we ask that you note this award as being received from the InvestNH Municipal Planning & Zoning Grant Program, funded by the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs as part of the \$100 million InvestNH Initiative with ARPA State Fiscal Recovery funds. This award will be administered jointly by NH Housing, Plan NH, and UNH Cooperative Extension.

On behalf of the Steering Committee, congratulations!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tiffany McNamara".

Tiffany Tononi McNamara
Steering Committee Chair

Executive Director | Plan New Hampshire
603-452-7526 | tiffany@plannh.org



Town of Rye PLANNING BOARD

TRANSMITTED ON JANUARY 26, 2023 VIA EMAIL TO info@NHHOPgrants.org

To the InvestNH Municipal Planning & Zoning Grant Program:

On behalf of the Town of Rye Planning Board, I submit applications for the InvestNH Needs Assessment grant.

Rye is a predominantly rural residential coastal community where limited lands remain available for residential development under current zoning and land use regulations. Our hope is to use the Housing Opportunity Planning Grant Program funds to investigate how housing options may be accommodated into the existing fabric of our community. The Planning Board recognizes that community input will be vital to any decisions moving forward and hope to engage residents in a meaningful dialog about housing values, needs and perspectives about how to meet the needs of the community while preserving its character.

Rye anticipates funding a comprehensive update of their Master Plan with funds in the capital outlay on the March 2023 town ballot. All work supported by an Invest NH Housing grant will be coordinated with the Master Plan update effort and its consultant if the Master Plan update is funded.

We look forward to a favorable decision on our grant applications and working with the InvestNH team.

Respectfully,

Patricia Losik, Planning Board Chair
C: (603) 498-6498 E: patlos@comcast.net

cc: JM Lord, Planning Board Vice Chair
Kimberly Reed, Planning & Zoning Administrator

**INVESTNH MUNICIPAL PLANNING & ZONING GRANT PROGRAM:
HOUSING OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM NEEDS ASSESSMENT GRANT**

TOWN OF RYE, NEW HAMPSHIRE

**TOWN OF RYE, NEW HAMPSHIRE
10 Central Road, Rye, NH 03870**

The Town of Rye Planning Board has prepared an application to the InvestNH Housing Opportunity Grant Program for a Needs Assessment grant.

PROJECT CONSULTANT CONTACT INFORMATION:

Consultant to be assigned.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The Town of Rye is applying for a Housing Opportunity Planning Needs Assessment Grant to support gathering of community input and preparation of a comprehensive housing profile for the town outlining its needs, challenges and goals to advance housing options in the short-term and long-term.

Rye anticipates funding from its budget (Capital Outlay) for a complete a comprehensive update of their Master Plan and a build out analysis. All work support by an Invest NH Housing grant will be coordinated with the Master Plan update effort if the Master Plan update is funded. The Master Plan initiative could serve to elevate dialog and knowledge of housing needs in the community and advance implementation of planning tools and action based recommendations to address them.

TOWN OF RYE UEI

The Town of Rye Unique Entity Identifier (UEI): **W7T9LVL3QDQ1**

MUNICIPAL AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

Patricia Losik, Planning Board Chair



Date 1/25/2023

Grant proposal submitted pursuant to the Planning Board’s authority to receive grants under RSA 673:16.I.

APPLICATION NARRATIVE

HOUSING CHALLENGES AND PROJECT GOALS

Rye is an Atlantic Coast community with a population of 5,554 persons (as of 2021) and 12.6 square miles of land and water. The median age of a Rye resident is 55.6 years. Rye has an estimated 3,026 housing units and an occupant density of 439 persons per square mile.

A number of internal and external driving factors have dictated housing development in Rye, its availability and affordability, and opportunities or lack thereof to expand housing choices to serve low and moderate income households. Current housing needs for many have changed substantially in the last 20 years however the ways in which housing is regulated and planned for has not kept pace with changing demographics and the needs of residents including the elderly, single households and low to moderate income households.

Our goal is to use the Housing Opportunity Grants to address the following housing challenges and goals.

Cost of Land and Development

Over the last few decades, the cost of housing in Rye has increased significantly as it has nationwide. A primary factor influencing increased land and real estate values is the cost of land on which to design and construct housing. The cost of land pushes developers to construct larger homes to recoup the increased cost of land. This trend results in limited opportunity to create housing that serves populations that need affordable choices perhaps for the short-term but also for populations looking toward downsizing as they age in place. Development is served by private septic systems, and public sewer, where available. Rye residents and businesses receive water from one of four sources: Rye Water District, Aquarion Water Co., Portsmouth Water System, and private wells.

Zoning and Land Development Regulations

A second factor is the long-standing land use and development practice of zoning requiring the majority of the town's residential development to have a minimum of 66,000 square foot lot for the purpose of a single dwelling, and 88,000 square feet lot for a two-unit dwelling. The town adopted a conservation land development ordinance (2010) which allows for reduced lot sizes and dimensional requirements in exchange for conservation of open space. While attractive for conventional residential development, current zoning standards do not offer a substantial incentive or benefit to facilitate development of affordable and workforce housing due to the cost of land. Current zoning does allow for development of multi-family developments however this more flexible zoning has been utilized sparingly over the years since its adoption in 2010. Substantial redevelopment of underutilized properties and conversion of seasonal vacation businesses and rental dwelling units have been converted to year-round-single-family homes.

Demographics

A third factor in the housing discussion is accommodation for elderly residents and new generations of younger residents and families. Both demographics bring with them unique housing challenges. For elderly residents, many look toward downsizing to a smaller home or aging in place. Aging in place,

often over time, requires modifications to an existing home to serve specific needs such as reduced mobility, and may include ways to supplement fixed and limited incomes through bringing in renters, or constructing an Accessory Dwelling Unit. New generations of younger single residents and couples and young families often look toward smaller starter homes. The lack of housing stock in the small home market remains very limited whether existing homes or through new construction. Options for smaller budget friendly homes is on the rise nationwide however local and state regulations can be prohibitive to developing such housing options.

Primary Goals

The primary goals of the Needs Assessment grant application are to gather public opinion data and engage with citizens on housing issues, compile regional and town housing needs data and projections, identify priority housing needs in the community, and review and analyze current zoning and land use regulations to identify how they facilitate, hinder, or simply don't address community housing needs. Moving forward new and emerging housing challenges will need to be identified and addressed through planning.

OUTCOMES AND DELIVERABLES

The primary desired outcomes of the Needs Assessment is to:

- **FOCUS ON HOUSING:** Elevate housing needs as an issue of importance to the community and its future success and resilience. **DELIVERABLE:** Execute Community Outreach Plan.
- **COMMUNITY INPUT:** Gather community opinion data, document community values and attitudes toward housing, and use this information to convene a public dialog about housing. **DELIVERABLE:** Community Housing Opinion Survey.
- **REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE:** Bring forward statistical housing data for the town and the surrounding region to gain perspective on regional housing needs and challenges. **DELIVERABLE:** Regional Housing Needs Assessment results.
- **ACTIONS:** Form actionable recommendations that address existing and projected housing deficiencies. **DELIVERABLE:** Action based findings.
- **COMPETITIVE MARKETS:** Examine methods to increase/expand the town's competitiveness in workforce and affordable housing markets. **DELIVERABLE:** Data from housing market reports.
- **ENHANCE ENGAGEMENT:** Identify additional information, tools and community engagement that would advance dialog and action on comprehensive housing needs and challenges. **DELIVERABLE:** Explore communication venues to reach varied audiences.
- **RECOMMENDATIONS:** Draft recommendations to address housing barriers and challenges identified by the community. **DELIVERABLE:** Summary of results from community engagement and survey.
- **DECISION MAKERS:** Inform and report to decision makers and the Planning Board the best available data on housing in the community (e.g. stock, trends, development costs, community needs, barriers to expansion of housing options). **DELIVERABLE:** Summary of input from meetings with decision makers and the Planning Board.
- **TOOLS:** Explore and discuss regulatory and planning tools available to address housing issues identified in the Needs Assessment phase. **DELIVERABLE:** Summary of regulatory and planning tools considered as favorable by decision makers, the Planning Board and the community.

- **PATH FORWARD:** Create a path forward to potential regulatory and long-range planning actions to address housing needs and challenges and investigate new approaches and ideas to get there. **DELIVERABLE:** Final summary report of favorable actions to advance housing needs identified by the community and stakeholders.

Specific grant project(s) deliverables are detailed in the proposed Needs Assessment Project Budget below.

PART 1: NEEDS ASSESSMENT GRANT APPLICATION

SCOPE OF WORK AND BUDGET

TASK 1 - Phase 1: Public Opinion Survey

Phase 1 will implement the following task-based activities:

- Task 1a - Conduct a public opinion survey focused on housing, land use and current zoning.
- Task 1b - Distribute and promote the survey throughout the community using social media outlets and printed media.
- Task 1c - Collect responses and analyze the data.
- Task 1d - Prepare a summary report of the public opinion survey results and disseminate to the public possibly at an in-person public workshop to foster dialog about housing needs and challenges in the community.
- Task 1e - Review survey results with the Planning Board.

Refer to the Community Engagement Section below for additional details.

TASK 2 - Phase II: Analysis of Needs Assessment Reports and Data

Phase II will implement the following activities:

- Task 2a - Analyze products and data from the statewide housing needs assessment from the regional planning commissions.
- Task 2b - Compile data as needed to create a housing profile for Rye. [Note: The Rockingham Planning Commission has reported that their final housing needs assessment report and products will be released in mid-February 2023. A more detailed scope of work and work plan will be developed for the grant once the final report and data are released.].
- Task 2c - Summarize data from the Needs Assessment reports released by the Rockingham Planning Commission including but not limited to demographic data, housing data, and land use data.
- Task 2d - Prepare final community housing needs profile identifying specific critical data points and the internal and external factors that influence the availability and affordability of housing in town.

Task 3 – Community Engagement

Refer to details in the Community Engagement section following.

Rye currently has a warrant article on the 2023 town ballot to complete a comprehensive update of their Master Plan. All work supported by an Invest NH Housing grant will be coordinated with the Master Plan update effort if the Master Plan update is funded.

WORKPLAN

A detailed task based workplan and timeline for completion of deliverables for Phase I and Phase II will be prepared in coordination with the Planning Board, technical advisors and the community outreach effort as these actions are developed with input from all stakeholders including the comprehensive Master Plan update project if funded.

PART 1 PROJECT BUDGET

PROPOSED BUDGET			
Task	Task Name	Details	Cost
1	Part I - Phase 1: Public Opinion Survey and Data Collection Report	Completed by Consultant with the Planning Board and project advisors	\$5,000
2	Part II - Phase II: Analysis of Needs Assessment Reports and Data	Completed by Consultant with the Planning Board and project advisors	\$8,000
3	Community Engagement: Conduct public outreach on the draft and final Needs Assessment report (see Community Engagement section detailed on page 6)	Completed by Consultant with project advisors and UNH Cooperative Extension staff	\$4,000
4	Housing Academy Stipend	3 people at \$250 per attendee	\$750.00
TOTAL			\$17,750

TIMELINE FOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT GRANT TASKS

Below is a draft timeline for the proposed Needs Assessment Grant Tasks

Task Description	NEEDS ASSESSMENT									
	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct		
Phase 1: Public Opinion Survey – Tasks 1a-1e										
Task 1.a: Conduct a public opinion survey and collaborate with the ongoing Master Plan Update project (if funded)										
Task 1.b: Distribute and promote the survey widely using social media outlets and printed media.										
Task 1.c: Collect responses and analyze the data										
Task 1.d: Prepare a summary report of the public opinion survey results and disseminate to the public										
Task 1.e: Review survey results with the Planning Board, land use boards and municipal staff										
Phase II: Analysis and Summary of Needs Assessment Reports and Data; Compile Profile										
Community Engagement										
Housing Academy Training										

CONSISTENCY WITH MASTER PLAN

Rye anticipates fundings from the Town budget (Capital Outlay) on the 2023 town ballot to complete a comprehensive update of their Master Plan and a build out analysis. All work supported by an Invest NH Housing grant will be coordinated with the Master Plan update effort if funded by vote at the March 2023 town vote.

The majority of the Rye Master Plan has not been updated in many years. The Master Plan has been updated chapter by chapter from 2013 to 2018. The Master Plan does contain chapters dedicated to housing - Chapter 5 Housing (2013) and Chapter 5A Workforce Housing (2013) based on 2010 U.S. Census data. Many assumptions and recommendations in these chapters no longer address current housing conditions and needs in 2023. The upcoming release of the NH statewide housing needs assessment as well as information updated in reports published by the NH Employment Security ELMI (<https://www.nhes.nh.gov/elmi/products/cp/>) will provide a new perspective on current trends and emerging issues related to housing needs, availability, cost and accessibility for low to moderate income households. The Master Plan was last updated in 2018 by updated the Existing and Future Land Use Chapter, Transportation Chapter and Natural Resources Chapter. A 2021-Natural Resources Inventory prepared by FB Environmental may provide information about areas of land available and suitable for future development.

Document Links

Zoning Ordinance <https://ecode360.com/33983725>

Land Development Regulations for Site Plan and Subdivision <https://ecode360.com/33983725>

Master Plan <https://www.town.rye.nh.us/planning-department/pages/master-plan>

2022 Natural Resources Inventory <https://www.town.rye.nh.us/conservation-commission>

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

The Community Engagement Plan will focus on the following primary activities to promote community dialog, bring forward new information from the Needs Assessment and engage residents in discussions about what regulatory and planning tools and actions are available to expand housing choices in town.

1. Community Engagement and Outreach

A public opinion survey is proposed for Phase I of the Part I Needs Assessment Grant. The survey will be provided via an online platform and paper copies at key town offices and facilities. Survey links will be distributed on the Planning Board webpage and via email to all municipal staff, elected officials and boards and commissions. Flyers and posters advertising the survey and the larger housing assessment projects will be posted around town. Invitations will be extended to any board, commission or group that requests a meeting or workshop to discuss housing needs and challenges. Focus groups may also be planned depending on community interests. It may be possible to incorporate an activity at the Rye Elementary School such as an art contest or in-class workshop. Details about this option would be forthcoming.

A comprehensive Community Engagement Work Plan will be prepared in collaboration with town staff and elected officials, boards and commissions, committees, and community groups. The work plan will lay out monthly targets and goals for reaching various audiences particularly during their regularly scheduled meetings and meeting places. The work plan will focus on dissemination of information gathered in both the Phase 1 and Phase 2 grants. Formation of an Outreach Committee will be considered depending on the level of interest to participate.

2. Grant Project(s) Advisors

The Needs Assessment grant project could benefit from participation of project advisors to provide guidance, local knowledge and general oversight of tasks and final deliverables and guide community outreach efforts. Advisors of not more than 3 persons comprised of individuals with skills sets that would complement the project scope of work might include: Planning Board, Conservation Commission, real estate, marketing, accounting/data management, and long-term knowledge of town history, growth patterns and regulations. The Consultant would establish a regular meeting schedule with the advisors or as information and task-based products are completed for review and discussion.

3. Planning Board and Municipal Consultation and Coordination

The Consultant will provide to the Planning Board a monthly written status report of grant work and task related activities conducted/completed and consult with the Board on discussion items. The Planning Board may choose to appoint management of the Needs Assessment grant project to its Long-Range Planning Committee or assign a separate committee for the project.

Rye anticipates funding from the Town budget (Capital Outlay) on the 2023 town ballot to complete a comprehensive update of their Master Plan and a build out analysis on the March 2023 town ballot to fund a comprehensive update of their Master Plan. All work support by an Invest NH Housing grant will be coordinated with the Master Plan update effort and with its consultant if the Master Plan update is funded.

PLANNING BOARD

-Rye, New Hampshire-

NOTICE OF DECISION

Discussion:

On the January 17, 2023 the Planning Board discussed the need for apply for a grant to assist the Planning Board on a needs assessment for housing that would also assist the Master Plan process.

Date of decision:

January 17, 2023

Decision:

The Board voted unanimously to apply for the InvestNH Needs Assessment grant offered by NHHOPgrants.

The Rye Planning Board meetings are livestreamed and may be viewed at [Stream Video - Town Hall Streams](#). The time of the vote was at time stamp: Motion happened at 07:32:14 PM

1/20/2023

Date



J.M. Lord, Vice-Chair
Rye Planning Board

Note: This decision is subject to motions for rehearing which may be filed within 30 days of the above date of decision by any person directly affected by it including any party to the action, abutters and the Rye Board of Selectmen; see *Article VII, Section 703 of the Town of Rye Zoning Ordinance*. Any work commenced prior to the expiration of the 30 day rehearing / appeal period is done so at the risk of the applicant. If a rehearing is requested, a cease and desist order may be issued until the Board of Adjustment has had an opportunity to act on the rehearing request.