



**TOWN OF
MONTAGUE
MASSACHUSETTS**

TOWN HALL
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Turners Falls, MA 01376

Office of the Selectboard
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MEMORANDUM

**TO: Selectboard
Walter Ramsey, Town Administrator
Chris Nolan-Zeller, Assistant Town Administrator**
**FROM: Maureen Pollock, Planning Director
Montague MVP 2.0 Core Team**
**RE: Montague MVP 2.0 Core Team Announces Selection of Window Insert Community Build
Project as Seed Project**
DATE: April 28, 2025

Montague's MVP 2.0 Core Team is pleased to announce that the Window Insert Community Build project has been selected as the climate-resilience "seed" project to help strengthen our community against the effects of climate change. With approval from our grantors - MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA), Montague will allocate \$50,000 to execute this 12-month resilience project.

The decision was made after careful consideration of several key factors, including robust public support for the project and its alignment with the resilience priorities set forth by EEA's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program. The Core Team evaluated the project against established criteria, ensuring that it meets the necessary standards to significantly benefit our community and address vulnerability concerns effectively.

The selected Window Insert Community Build project aims to promote energy efficiency and comfort in local homes of low-income homeowners and tenants, while simultaneously reducing our carbon footprint.

It serves as a practical solution that empowers community members to take part in climate adaptation efforts, making Montague a leader in sustainability.

We extend our gratitude to all community members who voiced their support and contributed to the project proposal. Your enthusiasm and engagement were instrumental in this selection, and we look forward to collaborating with you throughout the project's implementation.

Enclosed you may find the Seed Project Implementation Plan, Project Budget, and Anticipated Timeline for the Window Insert Community Build.

For more information, please visit the Montague MVP 2.0 Project Page: <https://montague-ma.gov/p/1554/>.

More information to follow.

In the meantime, if any residents are interested in volunteering as of this initiative, please email Maureen Pollock, Planning Director at mpollock@montague-ma.gov

Seed Project Plan

Part B: Seed Project Implementation Plan

Seed Project Vision and Goals

1.1 Give a brief overview of your Seed Project. What are the goals and desired outcomes? Consider the outcomes you outlined in Part A above. How will achieving those outcomes help to build resilience in your community or region in the near-term and as the climate continues to change?

Response: Window inserts are insulating window inserts made of a pine film-wrapped on each side with tightly sealed clear, polyolefin or similar film. The airspace between the two layers creates additional insulation compared to one layer of plastic. The insert is finished with a compressible foam gasket. The foam allows enough give for the inserts to be easily slid into place, while holding firmly enough to provide a tight, friction-based seal. Each insert frame is custom made based on measurements taken for each window frame. No fasteners are required, so renters do not have to worry about talking to their landlords about making modifications around their window sills. Window inserts are shown to significantly reduce drafts and raise internal temperatures in winter, and cool internal temperatures in summer in rooms/homes with air conditioners. The cost of materials for a window insert averages from \$40 to \$80 according to research done with two communities that have made them.

A multi-day community build in Montague could be modeled after elements after the [Window Dressers model](#) and “winserts” trainings held in the past decade in Franklin County and the North Quabbin area by [North Quabbin Energy](#), Greening Greenfield, and the Center for EcoTechnology (CET). With a community build, people who have ordered windows for their house volunteer for a half-day shift building the inserts. The building process is set-up in large space with tables (e.g. cafeteria or gym) with seven or so stations. Participants can then bring home their inserts at the end of the day or pick them up at a later time.

The Core Team values the window insert community build project idea for

- its immediate and visible impact;

- the trifold impact on comfort/safety, cost, and emissions reduction;
- the likelihood that the project could positively serve a high proportion of low-income homeowners and renters;
- the great potential for collaboration with multiple community organizations or schools;
- the social/community-building element of the community build event; and
- the possibility that essential parts of the project could continue in future years).

1.2 Building community resilience is an ongoing process. Where does this project fit in? How does this project build on existing work? How does this project lay the groundwork for future steps?

Response: Window inserts are a low-cost/easy-to-build strategy for improving home insulation in winter and, if A/C is used, summer. About a decade ago, the Montague Energy Committee, among other municipal Energy Committees across Franklin County, hosted a handful of workshops focused on how to build window inserts at home. People who have window inserts because of these workshops have been very happy with them and have advocated for workshops to be more widely offered. The project builds on this general support and the need to be build personal resilience (in the form of window inserts) and building community at the same time. Although window inserts benefit low-income Montague residents on a household-by-household basis (including homeowners & tenants), window insert builds are designed to be annual programs that run as long as there is demand in the community. Although this project is financially supported by MVP 2.0 funds, it is being designed in such a way as to build up the systems and volunteer capacity to run in subsequent years.

Project Partners

2.1 Who will be the project partners involved in developing and implementing this project? What are their roles and responsibilities on this project? What experience or expertise do they bring? Identify all project partners who will be paid from the Seed Project. If specific individuals or vendors have not been identified, name the role that will be filled.

Response:

Draft list:

- Project coordinator (paid stipend)
- Building coordinator (paid stipend)
- Montague Energy Committee
- Franklin County Technical School/Turners Falls High School
 - space use
 - video
- Local Contractors
- North Quabbin, Energy and Greening Greenfield, [WindowDressers](#)
- Montague Community Television (MCTV)

Project Scope

3.1 What are the steps involved in completing this project? Break the project down by phases or by tasks. For each phase or task, specify:

- What is the objective of this phase or task?
- What are the activities that will be completed?
- How will community members, and specifically EJ and other priority populations, provide insight, advise the process, participate in decision-making, or vet the ideas during this step of the process?
- What are the deliverables or outputs of this task or phase?

Tip: For projects that have discrete tasks, consider listing out the steps by task. Alternatively, if many of the tasks are integrated or occurring simultaneously, consider breaking the project into phases.

Response:

Task 1. Hire coordinators

Objective

- Project Coordinator will be responsible for scheduling, venue coordination, publicity, signing people up and managing payments, coordinating volunteer shifts, managing the budget, and working with a Building Coordinator.
- A Building Coordinator will be responsible for taking window measurements, determining eligibility for subsidized windows for low-income residents, cutting/preparing wooden frame pieces, and supervising the community build(s).

Activities

- 1) Town Planner will advertise for and hire a Project Coordinator and a Building Coordinator.

Community advising & decision making

- None for this task

Deliverable

- 1) Job descriptions for Project Coordinator and Building Coordinators.

Task 2. Groundwork

Objective

- Train Project and Building Coordinators on what will be needed to complete the project and establish the details necessary for promoting the project.
- The involvement of community organizations in the process this year is meant to cultivate volunteers and develop relationships that could serve in future years (e.g., Energy Committee, Franklin Tech, Local Contractors, Drawdown Montague, Honor Society students).

Activities/Deliverables

- 1) Coordinators will establish a project timeline with the Town Planner.
- 2) Coordinators will conduct research and get trained on window insert building and community build systems.
- 3) Project Coordinator will identify project partners (organizations interested in partnering, venue, sponsors, etc.), sponsors, book venue, and schedule the build.
- 4) Project Coordinator will develop a system for tracking participants and windows.
- 5) Building Coordinator will price out materials and determine unit costs per window.

Community advising & decision making

- None for this task

Deliverables

- 1) Project timeline document, adjusted as needed
- 2) Notes on research and training
- 3) Documentation of partners and sponsors and any agreements; rental contract with venue
- 4) System for tracking participants and windows (e.g. Excel spreadsheet) and written instructions for using
- 5) Material cost sheet documenting per-unit cost of all materials and estimated number of inserts that can be made within the budget

Task 3. Promotion

Objectives

- Promote the window inserts community build opportunity to all residents, with enhanced outreach to renters and landlords.

Activities

- 1) Project Coordinator will design outreach and promote the window inserts and community build.
- 2) Coordinators will take insert orders and measurements.
- 3) Project Coordinator will recruit any additional volunteers needed to fill all shifts and will establish the expectations of volunteers and how to communicate this.

Community advising & decision making

- Project Coordinator will work with Montague's MVP 2.0 Core Team to promote the program to target residents: renters and landlords, including those the Core Team worked with throughout the MVP 2.0 process. The Core Team will advise the Project Coordinator on how to explain the This will include promotional materials in Spanish and work with Spanish-speaking community liaisons to explain to Spanish-speaking residents the program and how to sign up.

Deliverables

- 1) Original editable files and final PDF/JPEG files of all outreach materials.
- 2) Same as Subtask 2.4
- 3) List of current and future potential volunteers years with preferred roles identified and documentation of communications with volunteers

Task 4. Set Up & Community Build

Objectives

- Ensure all of the elements are in place for a successful community build.

Activities

- 1) Building Coordinator will purchase supplies, cut frames, prepare for the build, and conduct any other tasks necessary for the community build.

- 2) Project Coordinator will schedule work shifts and food shifts and conduct any other logistical tasks necessary for the community build.
- 3) Facilitate a well-organized community build.

Community advising & decision making

- See Subtask 5.3

Deliverables

- 1) Documentation of the process Coordinators had for this subtask and lessons learned.
- 2) Documentation of the process Coordinators had for this subtask and lessons learned.
- 3) Documentation of the process Coordinators had for this subtask and lessons learned.

Task 5. Telling the story

Objectives

- Tell the story of window inserts meet a need that is otherwise difficult to meet and how the community build has a positive impact on the community in order to develop institutional and volunteer support to hopefully inspire/allow the project to transition into a volunteer-led, community-supported project that lasts multiple years and inspires similar projects in other communities. Highlight the participating of landlords where possible to promote better relationships with landlords.
- Document the process in a way that will allow other communities to use Montague's process as a blueprint.

Activities

- Project Coordinator will communicate about the goals and successes of the project through a variety of media.
- Project Coordinator will record interviews with self-identifying low-income or landlord participants (recipients of windows or volunteers) to capture information about the community build experience and the benefits of the inserts.
- Project Coordinator will oversee the creation of a short video documentary about the community build process and a how-to video about inserts (could be a student project).

Community advising & decision making

- In interviews, ask how the process could be better designed to support residents with fewer resources.

Deliverables

- 3 – 4 public-facing “stories” about the project in the form of newspaper publication, website, radio story, school newsletter blurbs, TV spot, storymap, or other media.
- 4 – 6 interviews with participants (community build volunteers or window insert recipients).
- 1 short documentary of the community build process and 1 how-to video on how to build window inserts.

3.2 Outline your engagement plan for the activities that involve community outreach and engagement. For each activity, specify how the activity is specifically designed for, or increases accessibility for, EJ and other priority populations. Use the Engagement Plan document for developing your approach.

Response: This project will provide the opportunity for all Montague residents and landlords to order and create window inserts. However, a portion of the windows will be reserved for renters and/or renters in the hope of improving the living conditions in Montague’s rentals. In promotion of the opportunity, it will be made clear that renters do not have to ask their landlords for permission to have window inserts, but information will also be provided to renters that they can give to their landlord that encourages the landlord to take on the ordering/volunteering work of window inserts.

The following are ways that the community build, publicity, and window inserts themselves are being designed to be more accessible:

- Promotion materials will be provided in Spanish. One – two shifts will be scheduled with Spanish translation.
- Light breakfast and lunch snacks will be provided.
- Childcare will be provided for children 6 and under.
- The Community Build will be scheduled over both week and weekend days in consideration for a diversity of work schedules, particularly working poor who may not be available during typical shift times.
- Wheelchair accessibility will be considered in the venue and at work-stations where possible.

- Window inserts will be designed with a loop so it is easy to pull out for people with poor grip strength.

Project Budget and Timeline

4.1 Use the Budget and Timeline template provided to plug in your tasks and subtasks and map out your project timeline. In the box below, list the dates for the completion of major milestones. Note when you will provide your half-way project report to the MVP team. List any regulatory or permitting approvals that may be required and note where they will fall in the project timeline. Please do not select a Seed Project that will require extensive regulatory approval or permitting.

Response: See Seed Project Budget and Timeline document.

4.2 Use the Budget and Timeline template to map out your project budget. Does the budget feel feasible? Which parts may be tight? Are there adjustments you would make to the scope to better fit the budget?

Measuring Impact

5.1 How will you know if the project is successful? What will be the signs? How will you evaluate whether the project is supporting equity and social resilience? Consider the desired outcomes you outlined in Part A of your Seed Project Plan and refer to the ways to measure procedural, distributional, and interactional justice that you learned about in training 3 of the Equity and Climate Justice Learning Series. How will the people who will be most impacted by the project evaluate or weigh in on whether the project is successful?

Response: Impact will be measured in the following ways:

- Number of households who signed up for inserts.
- Number of people who signed up to volunteer in current and future years.
- Number of people who donated to subsidized inserts for future years.
- Qualitative analysis of interviews of low-income people who received inserts and people who volunteered at community builds.

We are looking to understand:

- 1) Whether participants felt as though the process worked well for them
- 2) Whether participants feel that participating in the program improved their feeling of resilience against climate change
- 3) Whether participants think the program should continue in future years
- 4) Whether participants met new community members they didn't know and had positive interactions

5.2 How might the learnings from this project be transferable to other communities? Will this project create tools, frameworks, or methods that could be easily adopted? How will the learnings from this project be shared with other communities?

Response: This project is designed to be an ongoing volunteer-led community program when the volunteer capacity exists. In northern New England states, the non-profit Window Dressers exists to support communities in their window insert programs, and this project team will reach out to Window Dressers to ask if they would like to pilot their program in Montague or simply share their tools. In addition, this project is designed to document the process (see deliverables for all tasks) and build enthusiasm and support (see Task 6) all along the way, whether it is at the town level or regional level. In the process of developing this project idea, we learned that there is enthusiasm for window inserts already all around the county, but so far no communities have tried the community-build model. It is our hope that this project will be the catalyst for more communities being empowered to create community builds.

5.3 What will be needed to sustain or maintain this project over the long-term? Outline how the municipality or region will plan on addressing those needs.

Response: See response to 5.2

MVP 2.0 Seed Project Budget and Timeline

Name of Grantee: Town of Montague, MA

Name of your Seed Project: Window Insert Community Build

Hourly
rate:

\$40

Project Task Description		Deliverables	Approximate Start Date	Approximate End Date	Project Team Costs	Labor hours	
Task or Phase 1: Hire Coordinators						Project Coordinator	Building Coordinator
Sub-task 1.1 Hire Project Coordinator and Building Coordinator		Job descriptions for Coordinator positions	1-Jul-25	15-Aug-25	\$ for Reporter classified?		
Total Task 1 Cost					\$0.00		
Task or Phase 2: Groundwork							
Sub-task 2.1 Establish a project timeline with the Town Planner		Project timeline document, adjusted as needed	15-Aug-25	1-Sep-25	\$400.00	5	5
Sub-task 2.2 Conduct research and get trained on window insert building and community build model		Notes on research and training	15-Aug-25	15-Oct-25	\$1,200.00	15	15
Sub-task 2.3 Identify project partners, sponsors, book venue, and schedule the build		Documentation of partners and sponsors and any agreements; rental contract with venue	15-Aug-25	15-Oct-25	\$1,200.00	30	
Sub-task 2.4 Develop a system for tracking participants and windows		System for tracking participants and windows (e.g. Excel spreadsheet) and written instructions for using	15-Aug-25	15-Oct-25	\$600.00	15	
Sub-task 2.5 Price out materials and determine unit costs per window		Material cost sheet and total inserts budget	15-Aug-25	15-Oct-25	\$600.00		15
Total Task 2 Cost					\$4,000.00	65	35
Task or Phase 3: Promotion & Sign-ups							
Sub-task 3.1 Promote window inserts and community build		Original editable files and final PDF/JPEG of all outreach materials	15-Oct-25	15-Jan-25	\$1,600.00	40	
Sub-task 3.2 Take insert orders and measurements		Same as Subtask 2.4	15-Oct-25	15-Jan-25	\$3,000.00	30	45
Sub-task 3.3 Recruit volunteers		Volunteer list and documentation of communications with volunteers	15-Oct-25	15-Jan-25	\$1,200.00	30	
Total Task 3 Cost					\$5,800.00	100	45
Task or Phase 4: Set Up & Community Build							
Sub-task 4.1 Purchase supplies, cut frames, prepare for the build, and other tasks.		Documentation of the process Coordinators had for this task and lessons learned	15-Jan-25	15-Feb-25	\$2,200.00		55
Sub-task 4.2 Schedule work shifts and food shifts, and other tasks		Documentation of the process Coordinators had for this task and lessons learned	15-Jan-25	15-Feb-25	\$1,200.00	30	
Sub-task 4.3 Facilitate community build		Documentation of the process Coordinators had for this task and lessons learned	15-Jan-25	15-Feb-25	\$4,400.00	55	55
Total Task 4 Cost					\$7,800.00	85	110
Task or Phase 5: Telling the Story							
Sub-task 5.1 Communicate the goals and successes of project		3 – 4 public-facing “stories” about the project in the form of newspaper publication, website, radio story, school newsletter blurbs, TV spot, storymap, or other media	15-Jan-25	15-Feb-25	\$1,200.00	25	5
Sub-task 5.2 Interview participants to capture information about inserts and builds		4-6 interviews with participants (community build volunteers or	15-Jan-25	15-Feb-25	\$600.00	15	
Sub-task 5.3 Oversee creation of a videos about community build process and window inserts		1 short documentary of the community build process and 1 how-to video on how to build window inserts	15-Jan-25	15-Feb-25	\$600.00	10	5
Total Task 4 Cost					\$1,800.00	50	10
Direct Costs		Assumptions			Direct Costs		
Direct Cost 1 Stipends for assistant with video documentation		Video students or community volunteers			\$800.00		
Direct Cost 2 Window inserts budget		325 window inserts @ \$80/insert (this is a high estimate for price per unit and may be revised in Subtask 2.5)			\$26,120.00		
Direct Cost 3 Food		Breakfast (\$200/day) and lunch (\$400/day) for 4 days supplemented by volunteer contribution			\$2,400.00		
Direct Cost 4 Publicity		Postcard mailing to all residents, printing, newspaper advertisement			\$2,000.00		
Direct Cost 5 Space rental		Estimate based on gymnasium rental rate at Turners Falls High School for 9 hours/day for 4 days			\$1,080.00		
Total Direct Costs					\$32,400.00		
TOTAL PROJECT COST					\$50,000.00	300	200