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May 3, 2022

Kara Runsten
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program
EOEEA, 100 Cambridge Street
Boston MA 02114

RE: Town of Stow MVP Action Grant Application – Stow Acres North

Dear Ms. Runsten:

I am very pleased to submit this application for a 2022 Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Action Grant for the Stow Acres North Land Acquisition and Climate Resilience Master Plan for the Town of Stow.

As Town Administrator, I have worked directly with the project team, since my arrival in Stow eighteen months ago, as we have sought to forge community consensus around the future of Stow Acres. The project enjoys broad support from, not only town boards and committees, but from residents and received an overwhelmingly positive vote at two successive town meetings last year.


The Year One funding requested for land acquisition is necessary to make the protection of Stow Acres North a reality, and the Year Two funding will create the blueprint for transformation of this property into a more climate resilience landscape. Stow is currently working on many fronts to address the impacts of climate change and this project has the potential to add to our collective knowledge about how to transform golf courses into more diverse and complex landscapes.

As authorized signatory, I can confirm that the Town of Stow is committed to providing the matching funds outlined in the application for the project, including \$2.5 million in Community Preservation Funds, \$25,000 cash match toward the preparation of a Climate Resilience Master Plan, and in-kind staff time to manage the project and carry out a thorough process of public outreach and engagement. This is well in excess of the

required 25% match. All match funds have been approved or are in the process of being approved. I also understand that this is a reimbursement grant.

This project is not only one of my highest priorities, but also the top priority of the Select Board, and we look forward to working with you on it. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or if I can provide any further information.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Denise M. Dembkoski". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Denise M. Dembkoski
Town Administrator

FY23 Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program Action Grant Application

RFR ENV 23 MVP 02

Instructions:

- This electronic application form accompanies RFR ENV 23 MVP 02. This is not intended to be a standalone document. Do not begin use of this application without reading the full Request for Responses documentation.
- Please fill out one application form per project, ensuring that all tasks in your project are related to each other (i.e., distinct projects should submit separate online applications).
- The application can be saved while working on it. Click "Save and Resume Later" at the bottom of the form and then click on "Save and Get Link". A link to the application will be provided which must be copied and saved in order to return to the application. A good way to ensure that the link is not lost is to email it to yourself.
- **Please note that any documents which have been uploaded at the end of the application will not be saved if leaving the site before submitting the application. The forms must be uploaded again upon re-entering the site and submitting the application.**
- **Please ensure that all files you upload are consistently labeled. Please make file names consistent with the following: [Name of municipality]_[Shorthand version of project title]_[Description of what the file contains]_ENV23MVP02**
- The maximum size of all uploaded attachments cannot exceed 25 MB total.
- **This application must be submitted by Thursday, May 5, 2022 at 2pm.**

Lead Municipality*

Stow

Please just the name, you can leave out "Town of" or "City of"

City or Town*

Town ▾

Supporting Municipalities (if regional application)

Project Title*

Stow Acres North Acquisition and Climate Resilience Master Plan

Shorthand Project Title*

Stow Acres North

This is what you will use when naming uploaded files. Please limit to 1-3 keywords.

MVP Region*

Northeast ▾

Select the MVP region associated with the lead municipality

Project Type (select best fit)*

Type 3: Construction and On-the-Ground Implementation ▾

Local Project Manager and Point of Contact:

Name*

Kathy

Sferra

First Name

Last Name

Job Title*

Conservation Director

Department/Agency*

Stow Conservation Commission

Email*

conservation@stow-ma.gov

Phone*

9788978615

Address*

Stow Town Building

380 Great Road

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

Stow
City

Massachusetts
State

01775
ZIP Code

Proposed Funding Summary:

Please round to the nearest whole number & please ensure these numbers match your scope/budget spreadsheet (Attachment B).

Grant Request Amount FY23*

\$960,000

Grant Request Amount FY24 (not required)

\$175,000

If selected for an award and requesting funding for a two-year grant, grantees may receive funds for both fiscal years or only for FY22 depending on funding decisions.

Total Grant Request Amount (add previous two questions)*

\$1,135,000

Match Amount. Must be at least 25% of total project cost, (or 10% if lead community listed in Attachment N of the RFR). Total project cost = total grant request + total match*

\$2,648,318

If your proposal is for two fiscal years, this should be the total match amount across both years.

Match Description. Please provide a description of how the municipality's match will be met and source of funding (i.e., "in kind" hours, and/or local, private, federal funds).

Please note, other state funding sources cannot be accepted as match. Further details on match requirements in Section 1.F of the RFR.*

conduct an invasive species survey of the property and prepare invasive species management recommendations. Stow TV will donate staff time and services to assist with producing the virtual site visit that will be done to help engage community members at the site virtually and will also assist with a video about the master planning process to help solicit feedback on the draft plan. In addition, a Steering Committee made up of a diverse group of at least 10 stakeholders, will meet regularly beginning in January 2023 to oversee the process of developing a Climate Resilience Master Plan for the newly acquired Stow Acres property. The Steering Committee will include board members, local environmental organizations, and neighborhood representatives. This in kind match is detailed in Appendix B. Total Town Staff Match and Volunteer Estimate (Year 1 and 2): \$48,318.

Project Details:

Project Summary: 2-4 sentences describing the project, goals, and main tasks.*

In October 2021, Stow Town Meeting voted to expend \$2.5 million toward the purchase of approximately two-thirds (~111 acres) of the Stow Acres North Course for conservation and recreation purposes, with the balance of the \$3,535,000 purchase price to be raised from gifts and grants. Assuming we are successful with securing the balance of the purchase price - for which we are requesting \$960,000 in MVP funding in Year 1- the purchase will be consummated in December 2022. Year 2 funding is being requested to engage a consultant to work with the community on preparation of a Climate Resilience Master Plan to guide site restoration and development of conservation and recreation facilities on the 111 acres being acquired by the Town plus 30 additional acres of adjacent land. The Plan will provide the blueprint for enhanced resilience of the entire site including wetland restoration, enhancement of flood storage capacity, removal of golf elements, planting of trees/shrubs and riparian buffers, increasing landscape diversity and complexity,

Representative image of the project (if possible)

Stow_StowAcresNorth_Representative Photo_ENV23MVP02.jpg

File uploads may not work on some mobile devices.

Is this project a continuation of a previous MVP funded project? If so, please describe:

No

Project Location(s): Please provide the address and lat/long coordinates for your project location or the closest addressed location. If the project will take place at multiple locations, please list all of them. (If the project is not at a specific location(s), for example a town-wide planning process, please enter N/A.)*

Project Location: Randall Road, Stow [42.4185824474784, -71.53103593282594]

The entirety of the project is located within the watershed of the Assabet River. Elizabeth Brook, which runs adjacent to the golf course, is a direct tributary to the Assabet River.

Project Narrative, Scope & Budget, and Attachments

- The maximum file size for uploads is 25 MB per form submission (not per file upload field).
- Please note that any documents which have been uploaded into the application will not be saved if leaving the site before submitting the application. The forms must be uploaded again upon re-entering the site and submitting the application.
- Please ensure that all files you upload are consistently labeled. Please make file names consistent with the following: [Name of municipality]_[Shorthand version of project title]_[Description of what the file contains]_ENV23MVP02
- Please upload files as PDFs if possible, unless otherwise specified (e.g., the scope/budget Attachment B should be uploaded as an Excel spreadsheet).

Project Narrative: Please upload a document with your answers to all the questions in the "project narrative" section of the application of the RFR (pages 19-28). Please make sure to include the name of the lead municipality and the project title at the top of the document. *

Stow_StowAcresNorth_Narrative_ENV23MVP02.pdf

File uploads may not work on some mobile devices.

Excel Version of Scope/Budget Spreadsheet (Attachment B in the RFR). Please delete the "tips" and "instructions" tabs before submitting. *

Stow_StowAcresNorth_Attach B Budget_ENV23MVP02.xlsx

File uploads may not work on some mobile devices.

Yearly Progress Report (use EEA-provided template in Attachment D of the RFR)

Stow_StowAcresNorth_2022_MVP Yearly Progress Report_ENV23MVP02.pdf

File uploads may not work on some mobile devices.

Required if the municipality completed their planning process a year or more ago. If regional application please include for all MVP-designated municipalities.

Statement of Match from authorized signatory of the municipality (described in Section 1.F of the RFR) *

Stow_StowAcresNorth_Statement of Match_ENV23MVP02.pdf

File uploads may not work on some mobile devices.

Required Information for Design and Construction Projects (Attachment C in the RFR) if applicable

Stow_StowAcresNorth_Attachment C_ENV23MVP02.pdf

File uploads may not work on some mobile devices.

Document with all letters of support compiled

Stow_StowAcresNorth_Letters of Commitment and Support_ENV23MVP02.pdf

File uploads may not work on some mobile devices.

Please do not have support letters sent in separately. Please compile them all into one document and attach here. Please include letters from the landowner for projects of any type (e.g., feasibility, design, permitting, or construction) on non-municipal property.

Draft Town Meeting or City Council vote language for land acquisition projects (see Section 2.B.3), if applicable.

Stow_StowAcresNorth_Attested Vote_ENV23MVP02.pdf

File uploads may not work on some mobile devices.

Appraisal that meets EEA standards for land acquisition projects.

Stow_StowAcresNorth_Appraisal_ENV23MVP02.pdf

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RMAT Climate Resilience Design Standards Tool report print out. Required for projects focused on a specific site and including a physical asset/s (e.g., building infrastructure, natural resources) at any project phase (e.g., planning, design, or implementation). See Attachment E in RFR for more information.

No File Chosen

File uploads may not work on some mobile devices.

This is where you can upload a print out from the online tool.

Optional Additional Attachment- Please describe in comment box below and ensure file name is clear.

Stow_StowAcresNorth_Map1Locus_ENV23MVP02.pdf

File uploads may not work on some mobile devices.

Optional Additional Attachment- Please describe in comment box below and ensure file name is clear.

Stow_StowAcresNorth_Map 2 - Phasing Plan_ENV23MVP02.pdf

File uploads may not work on some mobile devices.

Optional Additional Attachment- Please describe in comment box below and ensure file name is clear.

Stow_StowAcresNorth_Map 3 - Climate Resiliency Master Plan_ENV23MVP02.pdf

File uploads may not work on some mobile devices.

Optional Additional Attachment- Please describe in comment box below and ensure file name is clear.

Stow_StowAcresNorth_Map 4 - Flood Plain_ENV23MVP02.pdf

File uploads may not work on some mobile devices.

Please add any additional clarifications about your application materials here.

Optional Attachments are a series of four maps of the property and phases.

Signature of applicant- please leave this as the last thing you do before hitting the "submit form" button. Formstack may try to submit your form if you hit the enter key while filling it out, and leaving this until the very end will prevent your form from being submitted prematurely.*



A handwritten signature in black ink is written over a horizontal line. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'K. [unclear]'. The line extends across the width of the signature area.

[clear](#)

Use your mouse or finger to draw your signature above

[Save and Resume Later](#)

Submitting...

Stow Acres North Acquisition and Climate Resilience Master Plan MVP Grant Application Narrative

Proposed Funding Summary:

	Grant Request Amount	Match	Total Project Cost
FY 23	\$960,000	\$2,589,100	\$3,549,100
FY 24	\$175,000	\$57,796	\$232,796
Total	\$1,135,000	\$2,648,318	\$3,783,318

Match Description

As detailed in the budget, Stow's grant match is made up of the following (all confirmed):

1. **Town Cash Match** – The Town of Stow voted overwhelmingly at Special Town Meeting in October 2021 to expend \$2.5 million in Community Preservation Funds toward the Year 1 \$3,535,000 acquisition cost of 111 acres of the Stow Acres North Course for conservation and recreation purposes. This is 70% of the total acquisition cost. The Town will also commit \$25,000 in CPA funds, ARPA funds, or other municipal funds toward the Climate Resilience Master Plan effort in Year 2. **Total Two-Year Town Cash Match: \$2,525,000.**
2. **Stow Conservation Trust Cash Match** - Stow Conservation Trust (SCT) is fundraising from area residents for this project. SCT has committed to the fundraising goal of \$100,000 for the Stow Acres North acquisition. Of this, \$75,000 will go toward the purchase price and \$25,000 to due diligence and other associated costs. Only the \$75,000 is included as match for the purpose of this application. **Total SCT Match: \$75,000.**
3. The **Town of Stow Conservation Commission, Stow Planning Department, Stow Recreation Department, and Stow Town Administrator** will commit staff time and expertise to managing the project and budget, managing portions of the public outreach, and ensuring that goals of the project are fully met. Town Staff will also conduct an invasive species survey of the property and prepare invasive species management recommendations. **Stow TV** will donate staff time and services to assist with producing the virtual site visit that will be done to help engage community members at the site virtually and will also assist with a video about the master planning process to help solicit feedback on the draft plan. In addition, a **Steering Committee** made up of a diverse group of at least 10 stakeholders, will meet regularly beginning in January 2023 to oversee the process of developing a Climate Resilience Master Plan for the newly acquired Stow Acres property. The Steering Committee will include board members, local environmental organizations, and neighborhood representatives. This in kind match is detailed in Appendix B. **Total Town Staff Match and Volunteer Estimate (Year 1 and 2): \$48,318.**

Project Summary

In October 2021, Stow Special Town Meeting voted to expend \$2.5 million toward the purchase of approximately two-thirds (111 acres) of the Stow Acres North Course for conservation and recreation purposes, with the balance of the \$3,535,000 million purchase price to be raised from

gifts and grants. Assuming we are successful with securing the balance of the purchase price – for which we are requesting \$960,000 in MVP funding in Year 1— the purchase is expected to be consummated in December 2022. Year 2 funding of \$175,000 is being requested to engage a consulting team to work with the community on preparation of a Climate Resilience Master Plan to guide site restoration and development of conservation and recreation facilities on the 111 acres being acquired by the Town plus approximately 32 additional acres of adjacent land. The plan will provide the blueprint for enhanced resilience of the entire site including wetland restoration, increase in flood storage capacity, removal of golf elements, planting of trees/shrubs and riparian buffers, increasing landscape diversity and complexity, wildlife habitat enhancement, design of trails and state of the art “green” public recreation amenities. Climate resilient park facilities incorporating nature-based solutions will allow residents opportunities for healthy outdoor recreation and provide shade and water-focused recreation to mitigate impacts from extreme heat events.

Stow Acres North Project Narrative

1. Project Description, Rationale and Climate Data (13 Points)

A. Project Description: Land Acquisition (Year 1)

For decades, the future use and development of Stow Acres, the Town’s largest (36 hole) golf course and **the largest undeveloped parcel in Stow** (see Map 1) has been foremost in the minds of many Stow residents and officials. This 325-acre property contains significant conservation values – including riparian corridors along Elizabeth Brook and the Assabet River, scenic views from Randall Road and Gleasondale Road, woodlands and wetlands, significant floodplain areas, and opportunities for significant large-scale conservation and restoration. The 2016 Open Space and Recreation Plan identifies Stow Acres, as **one of the Town’s highest priorities for protection**, and the parcel is listed as a **regionally significant Priority Preservation Area in the 495/Metrowest Development Compact Plan**, prepared in 2012 by the 495/Metrowest Partnership. This priority reflects the recognition that development of this land could result in significant adverse climate and other impacts to the property, the community, and the Assabet River Watershed in which it sits.

Over the years, there have been various development and zoning change proposals that could have resulted in anywhere from 170 to 750 housing units constructed on the 325-acre Stow Acres property -- resulting in adverse impacts to Elizabeth Brook, wetlands, floodplains and wildlife migration corridors on the site, water withdrawals, and a reduction of climate resiliency. Although the Town of Stow had a Right of First Refusal through Ch.61B, the price for protection of the land – at one point reaching \$20 million – was more than the Town could reasonably consider.

In 2019, when rumors began circulating about the possible sale of Stow Acres for large-scale development, the Town and the nonprofit Stow Conservation Trust (SCT) reached out proactively to the property owners to begin discussions regarding a comprehensive vision for the property. These discussions led to the creation of a **groundbreaking, non-traditional partnership** that

included the Town, SCT, a private for-profit developer, and the owners of Stow Acres, who worked collaboratively for two years to develop an overall concept plan for the entire property in conjunction with a professional landscape design firm, Dodson and Flinker. The cost of the planning firm was shared between the Town and SCT.

The goal of the collaborative planning exercise was to explore whether the various interests at the table (conservation, recreation, housing, golf) could design an integrated outcome together that was better than any of them could have achieved individually and in a manner that would be financially feasible for all parties. Together, the partnership identified priority locations to focus development and meet the town's housing diversity needs, and areas that had the highest conservation values to support future trails, recreation facilities, restored wetlands and streams, inland flood mitigation, and conserved riparian corridors along Elizabeth Brook and the Assabet River.

The project team held multiple community forums to seek input and build community consensus on the overall land use vision for the property – with as many as 200 residents in attendance at each. Press releases, newspaper articles, social media posts, and flyers encouraged participation in this effort. The Town and the Trust then worked with the property owners to negotiate a two-phase plan for the conservation of more than 85% of the overall property for a total of \$5.035 million, significantly below the \$10.1 million appraised value. (See Map 2)

Stow residents voted nearly unanimously at Town Meeting in May 2021 to support **Phase 1** of the project and purchase a **permanent Conservation Restriction and public trail easement on Stow Acres South Course (151 acres) for \$1.5 million in Community Preservation Funds**. The Conservation Restriction had an appraised value of \$3.8 million and was acquired in December 2021 via a bargain sale, taking advantage of the Enhanced Federal Tax Incentives for Conservation. **Protection of the South Course is now complete and is not part of this grant application request but is important for an understanding of the larger initiative.** Under the terms of the Conservation Restriction the South Course will remain in its traditional use as a golf course – an important part of Stow's character and history – and the public will have trail access around the perimeter of the site and along the Assabet River. The South Course is the location of the first Black-owned and managed men's golf course in the United States in 1926, Mapledale Country Club, which hosted the United States Black Men's National Championships. Local plans are underway to commemorate this important aspect of black history at the site.

With Phase 1 of the Stow Acres Project complete, the Town is now seeking to complete Phase 2, the protection of the majority of the Stow Acres North property. We are requesting \$960,000 in MVP Action Grant funds for the purchase of 111 acres of Stow Acres North for conservation and recreation purposes. These grant funds will be combined with \$2.5 million from Community Preservation Act funds, already approved overwhelmingly by the voters at the October 2021 Special Town Meeting, and private fundraising by Stow Conservation Trust in the amount of \$75,000, to meet the \$3,535,000 purchase price for this property. Assuming the necessary funds can be raised, closing is expected in December 2022.

As with the South Course, the Town and the Trust worked together to negotiate very favorable purchase terms for the North Property. The appraised value of the property to be purchased is \$6.3 million (appraisal attached). As part of the purchase terms, Stow Acres will retain use of portions of the Town's property for nine holes of golf for up to 10 years (5 years in the case of the driving range) after which all golf use of the property will cease. Public access and parking will be permitted on the property during this lease term. This allows the Town time to prepare a master plan, design and permit proposed uses and facilities, and begin implementation of the vision for the property in a phased manner.

The remaining 1/3 of the North Course (approximately 65 acres) will be developed as a New England village style housing community by a private developer, MCO & Associates, that was designed during our collaborative community planning effort. The development – which to date has received widespread community support – will significantly advance goals expressed in the town's 2016 Housing Production Plan, allow the Town's Subsidized Housing Inventory to reach the 10% affordable goal of Chapter 40B,) and be designed to further the town's energy efficiency goals.

While not associated with the requested grant funds, the housing component will incorporate principles of climate resiliency. The location of the development is among the most environmentally suitable for development on the site. The homes proposed to be built are modest in size and will be located on *much* smaller lots – an innovative approach that enables the majority of the overall Stow Acres property to be preserved as open space. The traditional village design creates a walkable scale and interconnecting trails will allow the new residents of the site direct access to the town-acquired conservation and recreation land and miles of trails surrounding the North and South Properties. The Stow Acres property could have supported as many as 176 single family house lots on “standard” 1.5-acre house lots. Significantly more dwellings would have been likely through “40B” or over-55 development in accordance with Town bylaws. Such development would have adversely affected the property, the watershed, and the ecosystem services provided by this land – fragmenting habitat, adversely affecting wetlands, removing remaining trees that sequester carbon, increasing inland flooding, placing water supply demands on the aquifer, and resulting in undesirable stormwater and wastewater impacts to the Assabet River and its tributaries. Although this application focuses on the benefits of various nature-based solutions that will be incorporated into the plan to restore the property following acquisition, **the acquisition itself is the ultimate nature-based solution to avoiding these impacts and setting the stage for a landscape restoration and enhancement project that will increase the ability of this land to reduce and mitigate the impacts of climate change.**

B. Project Description: Development of Climate Resilience Master Plan (Years 1 and 2)

The Town of Stow is also requesting MVP Action Grant funds totaling \$175,000 in Year 2 to support a portion of the cost of preparation of a Climate Resilience Master Plan on the 111-acre “Stow Acres North” parcel to be acquired by the Town which will guide the overall restoration and use of the Stow Acres North property in a manner that ensures that our shared climate resilience goals are met. In developing the plan, the town seeks to incorporate scientifically grounded, nature-based solutions aimed at increasing the ecological and landscape diversity of the property, removing golf elements, restoring historically altered wetlands, increasing flood storage,

revegetating stream buffers, planting trees and shrubs, providing accessible public trails and recreation facilities to encourage fitness and health and integrating the property with the surrounding neighborhoods.

MCO & Associates, the developer of the remainder of the North Course parcel, has committed to including an additional 20 acres in the Climate Resilience Master Plan at the rear of the development parcel that includes Elizabeth Brook (the second largest tributary to the Assabet River in the watershed) and the riparian corridor along the Brook. **The Town will also include an additional 12.7 acres of contiguous Town-owned conservation land in this effort. In all, a total of nearly 145 acres will be included in the overall Climate Resilience Master Planning effort** (see Map 3). Design standards will require any recreation facilities to maximize resilience through drought tolerant grasses, restoration of and/or preservation of healthy soils, water reuse, stormwater recharge, diverse tree and shrub plantings and similar provisions. **Our goal is to have all facilities on the property serve as models for resilience and for users of the property to learn about the anticipated local impacts of climate change and how the property is playing a role in mitigating these impacts through interpretive signage and community education.**

The Town and key partners will carry out a **robust public engagement effort** to identify the facilities deemed desirable on the property by stakeholders and provide the project team with opportunities to educate the community on resilience design and planning. Fortuitously, this acquisition also coincides with the timing of the update of Stow's Open Space and Recreation Plan and Town-wide Master Plan, so public involvement that will occur in conjunction with those larger planning efforts will set the stage for this work and maintain community momentum in support of the more site-specific Stow Acres Climate Resilience Master Planning effort. The final Master Plan will include recommendations and concept plans that will provide for the ecological restoration and facility development at the site to occur in a phased manner that will be affordable for the Town and allow for adaptive management of restoration areas, incorporating lessons learned as we go. Our agreement with Stow Acres provides for a gradual phase out of the driving range and other golf uses on the Stow Acres North property, with removal of those golf elements by Stow Acres, and the town's ecological restoration activities will occur in conjunction with this timeline. The required CPA Conservation Restriction on the property will also be designed to further this master plan through the inclusion of envelope areas for recreational uses and resilient design standards from the master plan. Stow Conservation Trust, as our lead partner in this project, will hold this Conservation Restriction.

In preparing the Climate Resilience Master Plan, we will be **guided by the most recently available data concerning rainfall and climate trends** available through www.resilientma.org and other sources including the Northeast Regional Climate Center (NRCC). We will also incorporate recommended design standards from the RMA Climate Resilience Design Standards tool. Although we understand from the "Questions and Answers" document that this does not need to be submitted as part of the application for a land acquisition project, we performed an initial assessment of the project online and will consult the tool as we work on the Climate Resilience Master Plan for any guidance that it may offer regarding specific facilities so that our planning reflects the best available data. These data will be particularly useful in the planning for the wetland/floodplain and stream restoration aspects of the Plan. We have already conducted a site

visit with staff of the Division of Ecological Restoration to evaluate this wetland restoration project and will continue to take advantage of their expertise as we move forward with design of this project element.

C. Rationale and Climate Data

Stow's MVP Plan, prepared in 2018, identifies drought, extreme storms, and extreme temperatures as among the greatest challenges of climate change facing the Town. As a community we are dependent on individual private wells with no public water supply. The Northeast Climate Adaption Science Center's 2018 data, at resilientma.org, was cited in Stow's MVP Planning Study (June 2018) as projecting a 4.37°F increase in average daily temperature by 2050 and 10.94°F by 2100 for this region. As noted, this increase is expected to occur during all seasons. The number of days above 90°F, currently eight days a year on average, is expected to increase to up to 35 days in 2050 and up to 76 days in 2100. Average annual precipitation is expected to increase by up to six inches by 2050 and eight inches by 2100. Notably, the biggest increase is from significant storms of greater than 1" rainfall, currently seven days/year, and expected to increase by up to three days in 2050 and up to four days in 2100, across all seasons. Impacts of increased frequency and intensity of severe weather events are already noticeable in Stow. Going forward, we can expect to see additional flooding events, and stresses from heat on vulnerable populations, agriculture, and surface and groundwater supplies. We expect additional data on flood forecasts to be released during the planning phase of this project and will incorporate this and any other new information into our master planning as it becomes available.

Mitigating flood impacts to the Assabet River is particularly critical for the Town of Maynard immediately downstream. The Assabet River is a short (34 miles) river, meaning that its entire watershed of 177 square miles can be impacted by a single storm system. As a result, a flood situation can develop quickly. Data shows that timing from beginning of a storm to peak flow through Maynard is about 48 hours. Particularly damaging can be back-to-back storms – the first which saturates soils and the second to flood the already raised river. The result is flooded mill buildings, flooding on main street and potential loss of property and disruption of Maynard's downtown area. Efforts to increase the amount of flood storage in the watershed and allow more gradual release of these waters will help mitigate this flooding condition. In 1971, the Delaney Flood Control Project was completed in Stow, Bolton, and Harvard to attempt to mitigate flooding conditions in Maynard. While this significantly abated flooding impacts, they continue to occur on a regular basis. We are hopeful that nature-based solutions like enhancement of flood storage at Stow Acres, can avoid costly future hard flood mitigation infrastructure projects as rainfall amounts and severity of storms increase due to climate change.

The Stow Acres North project directly advances several of the high and medium priorities identified in Stow's MVP Plan including:

- Implementation of low impact development for all types of development;
- Maintaining and improving the health of wetlands, streams and waterbodies;
- Reducing water use from surface water bodies (by elimination of golf course water withdrawals);
- Public educational efforts;

- Increased groundwater recharge;
- Increase in conservation land to mitigate potential build-out/impervious areas; and
- Maintain habitat for aquatic/terrestrial species.

The entire Stow Acres property is identified as a high priority for protection on the Mass Audubon MAPPR website due to its large size and on TNC's Resiliency maps as important for its floodplain resources. Stow town officials are currently working with Mass Audubon to review and prioritize parcels of land in Stow for protection that could enhance resilience both for wildlife and human populations. Mass Audubon staff have created an online "Stow Climate Prioritization Application" in ArcGIS Online which the town's Open Space Committee is currently using in its Open Space and Recreation Plan update. **Review of the GIS data layers for the project site identify a large portion of the current Stow Acres Driving Range on the Stow Acres North Property as important for flood storage** (See Map 4). Indeed, the area that is currently a driving range at Stow Acres was historically subject to wetland alteration, stream channelization and fill that occurred decades ago and before our current understanding of the importance of wetlands. As recently as 2020, this area was proposed by Stow Acres for construction of a common driveway and five Approval Not Required lots. A private developer was considering this for a larger 40B development. While this seemed surprising to many, perc tests and an approved wetland delineation seemed to confirm the potential of the site for residential development. This development will be avoided by town acquisition of the property. A unique (for Stow) off-site spruce bog and pond located on (mostly) conserved land adjacent to Stow Acres contain a thriving beaver population whose dams are repeatedly breached by Stow Acres to prevent the driving range from flooding. These resources are located on the adjacent town Conservation parcel being included in the master plan.

Through the planning and design of the restoration of the driving range and surrounding low-lying areas we seek to enhance and increase flood storage and restore a more natural stream flow through the site – removing constrictive culverts and other obstacles to flow – as well as enhancing wetland vegetation and habitat. We will be guided in our efforts by climate data, RMA design standards, and historical aerials and topo maps showing the extent of fill and alteration. Several members of the core project team have also been involved with the wetland/habitat restoration done at Tidmarsh Farm, in Plymouth, MA, and will bring their knowledge of that project to this effort.

Although a full update of the Town's MVP Plan awaits guidance from the MVP 2.0 process currently underway at the state level, we have agreed to reconvene the planning team in May-June 2022 to discuss progress made to date in implementing the plan, incorporate newly hired key staff into the discussions, integrate the opportunity provided by Stow Acres, the recommendations and actions of the MVP-funded Healthy Lake Boon Initiative, and identify key next steps on priority actions.

Residents of Stow are excited about this project and proud of what we have already accomplished at Stow Acres as a community. **The project is already a model for a collaborative approach to forestalling potentially unsustainable development on a large, high priority parcel.** Rather than waiting for the property to be offered to the Town piecemeal under Chapter 61B at what would likely have been an unaffordable total price, and likely having only 120 days to respond, the Town

worked proactively with its partners to create a comprehensive, positive outcome for the land. We have upcoming presentations about this project scheduled with the statewide conservation agents, and just presented this project at our MAPC subregional meeting in May. Future similar presentations will be scheduled at conferences of the Mass Land Trust Coalition and Mass Association of Conservation Commissions, among others. **As a community we are now eager to turn our energies toward creation of a Climate Resilience Master Plan for the property that will guide the town's long-term restoration and use of the site in a comprehensive fashion.**

2. Timeline, Scope and Budget (15 Points)

A. Year 1 – Task 1 - Project Site Acquisition – December 2022

The Town and Stow Acres have negotiated a Purchase and Sales agreement for the 111-acre Stow Acres North Property (Shown as Phase 2 on Map 2) that provides for a December 2022 closing date assuming that the necessary remaining funds are raised. This P&S is currently being executed by the parties. The only significant contingencies are completion of an Environmental Site Assessment and Title, for which the Town will be responsible, and which we anticipate being completed prior to notification regarding this grant award. The property owner is responsible for preparation and approval of a plan dividing the Stow Acres North property into 2 parcels to be conveyed to the Town and to the developer. The Town will also complete a recordable survey showing areas to be conveyed separately to the care and custody of the Conservation Commission and Recreation Commission respectively as approved by Town Meeting. No grant funds or match are projected for this survey and other due diligence as this work is likely to occur before grant awards are announced. Local CPA funds totaling \$2.5 million have already been voted for this project by Town Meeting. Stow Conservation Trust has committed a cash match of \$75,000 toward the acquisition and will hold the required CPA Conservation Restriction. Both the Conservation Commission and Recreation Commission are committed to collaborative management of this property to accomplish the overall goals of the Master Plan and prepared to execute a Memorandum of Understanding to accomplish this as needed. As part of our outreach associated with this acquisition phase, we will prepare a case study article and slide show and share information about this project with communities and organizations regionally and statewide (e.g., MACC, Metrowest Conservation Alliance)

B. Year 1, Task 2 – Climate Resilience Master Planning – Pre-Planning – Jan. 2023 to June 2023

The Town will use the balance of Year 1 following the acquisition to convene the Steering Committee which will oversee the Climate Resilience Master Planning Effort, prepare an RFP, select a consultant team, and begin the public outreach for the project. The **Project Management Team** for this effort will meet regularly and will include: Stow Town Administrator, Stow Conservation Director, Stow Recreation Director, and Stow Town Planner, as well as a representative of Stow Conservation Trust, and a highly respected local wetland consultant who is donating her time to this effort. The Team will be responsible for coordinating with other project partners and stakeholders to engage them at key milestones/decision points. A larger **Steering Committee** made up of board members, residents, neighbors, and partners will be created to provide strategic direction and oversight of the master planning process and ensure that a robust public outreach and engagement effort is carried out. The town will also contribute \$25,000 match toward the master plan effort in FY 24. Approval for these funds is in process.

Anticipated Year 1 Climate Resilience Master Plan preparatory tasks and timeline from January – June 2023 include:

- Initial Meeting of Project Management Team
- Launch webpages devoted to Master Plan effort
- Form Steering Committee and hold at least three meetings
- Conduct at Least Two Spring Community Site Walks on the Property & Develop Virtual Site Visit in Conjunction with Stow TV to be posted online and rebroadcast on Cable TV
- Develop RFP for Master Plan Consultant, Interview and Select Consultant

Deliverables for this Master Planning preparatory phase will include copies of webpages, a list of steering committee members and meeting notes, a copy of the virtual site visit video, and a copy of the final RFP and contract for the selected consultant. Our regional MVP Coordinator will be invited to all steering committee meetings and site visits.

For the sake of simplicity of budgeting, all expenditures for the Master Plan effort in FY 23 will be town staff and volunteer “soft” match, with the Consultant Team formally beginning work as of July 1, 2023.

C. Year 2 – Preparation of Climate Resilience Master Plan – July 2023-June 2024

As noted, the Consultant Team will begin work in July 2023 with a formal kickoff meeting with the project team and the Steering Committee. We consulted with the firm of Dodson and Flinker in preparing the scope and budget for the Master Plan, however, the project will be bid in accordance with procurement laws. An approximate schedule of milestones follows. As materials are developed, they would be posted on the website, along with notes and minutes of meetings:

Site Characterization Phase: July-October 2023

- Site Characterization – Consultant Team – Map Existing Conditions – Complete Natural Resource inventory of site including site hydrology, (wetlands, floodplains, man-made alterations), soils, habitat and species, location of golf facilities to be removed, wooded areas, open areas – September 2023 - [Deliverable: maps and narrative]
- Invasive Species Mapping by Town and management recommendations (Match) -August-November 2023 [Deliverable: map/narrative recommendations]
- Community “Bio-Blitz”/Scavenger Hunt on the site to assist with inventory and encourage people to submit photos of themselves and favorite spots on the site – September 2023
- Steering Committee Meeting – Review Site Characterization – October 2023 [Deliverable: Minutes]
- Town Staff Supporting Activities during this phase: bimonthly newspaper articles/press releases, social media posts, Article in Council on Aging and Recreation Dept Newsletters, Tax Bill Flyer [Deliverables: Copies of all documents]

Visioning & Planning Phase: October 2023-January 2024

- Public Meeting #1 - October 2023 [Deliverable: Notes, Attendance List]
 - What does Resilience Mean for Stow Acres?

- What are your Hopes/Dreams for the Site? Vision Boards
- Priority Setting Exercise
- Focused Outreach to other key stakeholders: User Groups, Neighboring Communities, Scouts, Seniors
- Electronic or Asynchronous Method of Engagement (e.g., vision boards, virtual focus groups) to engage those unlikely or unable to attend public meetings
- Conduct at Least Two Community Site Visits to the Property – November 2023
- Synthesize Public Comments and hold second Public Meeting – January 2024 [Deliverable: Notes, Handouts]
- Town Staff Supporting Activities during this phase: bimonthly newspaper articles/press releases, social media posts, at least two regional newspaper press releases, Article in Council on Aging and Recreation Dept Newsletters [Deliverables: Copies of all documents]

Recommendations Phase – January 2024-May 2024

- Development of Draft Recommendations and Designs by Consultant Team- January-March 2024
- Public Meeting #3 – Present Draft Master Plan Recommendations/Designs for Public Comment and Feedback (in person and virtual) – April 2024
- Refine Recommendations/Designs and Finalize Master Plan – May/June 2024
- Town Staff Supporting Activities during this phase: bimonthly newspaper articles/press releases, social media posts, at least two regional newspaper press releases, Article in Council on Aging and Recreation Dept Newsletters [Deliverables: Copies of all documents]

Please note that no regulatory approvals are anticipated as part of this master planning effort. All permits will be secured in conjunction with the final design and construction of various elements. We will coordinate as needed with permitting agencies to understand regulatory requirements and ensure that our final design is feasible/permittable, particularly with regard to wetlands permitting.

3. Nature-Based Solutions and Environmental Co-Benefits (16 Points)

Stow has been very successful over the years in acquiring lands that have important ecological and recreational attributes. To date, the town has acquired approximately 1600 acres of conservation and recreation land and protected additional land through Conservation Restrictions. Our local partners – Stow Conservation Trust, Sudbury Valley Trustees, the Mass Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, and US Fish and Wildlife Service have also protected properties that enhance the diversity of the protected landscape in Stow. It only takes a glance at resilience maps of Stow to see that many of these protected properties serve as key “hot spots” of resilience and form an interconnected network of large blocks and corridors across the community. The Town is actively working to increase the size of these blocks and foster both wildlife and pedestrian connectivity through acquisition of key properties and planned development of other properties where appropriate, and this is expected to be a major focus of the ongoing Open Space and Recreation Plan update. **Land acquisition/protection is the ultimate nature-based solution to protecting rivers and streams, wetlands, forest blocks, wildlife corridors and other elements of resilience.** Both the MVP Plan (2018) and the “MAGIC Climate Change Resiliency Plan” (MAPC, 2017) note the important role that land acquisition has played in mitigating the impacts of climate change in Stow and advocate for continued efforts in this regard, as

well as for ecological and habitat restoration, including tree and shrub planting. At the same time, we also recognize that there are opportunities to enhance the resilience of key properties, particularly large parcels such as farms, orchards, and golf courses, that make up a significant portion of the remaining unprotected open land in Stow. **Protection and restoration of key sites, as opportunities arise, can avoid or manage development that would negatively affect resiliency, create and enhance connected corridors, and enhance landscape complexity and habitat diversity in order to increase the overall climate resiliency of our community.**

Once the acquisition at Stow Acres is complete, the Town seeks to have the 111-acre town-owned Stow Acres North property (along with the adjacent 32 acres to be included in the Climate Resilience Master Plan) serve as a model resilient conservation and park destination, guided by an overall master plan prepared by an interdisciplinary team that includes landscape designers/architects, individuals with expertise in ecological restoration planning, and park designers. **Included in the letters of support are letters from both the Stow Conservation Commission and Stow Recreation Commission which note the commitment of both landowners to the overall resilience goals of the project.** We expect that the development of the Climate Resilience Master Plan will involve significant community outreach – to stakeholders in Stow and beyond and have talked with a variety of local and regional groups including the **Troop 1 Boy Scouts, the Hudson Conservation Department, the Nashoba Area Social Justice Alliance, the Stow Council on Aging, the Assabet Valley Boys and Girls Club** (based in Maynard) about working with their members and contacts to encourage participation in this effort. The Master Planning effort would be guided by a Steering Committee with a diverse membership which would ensure that we bring our best thinking to this process and engage residents in understanding and incorporating the issues of climate resilience and mitigation into this landscape. Longer term, the project will also provide an opportunity for citizen science, supplemented by professional oversight, to monitor the restoration of natural areas and coordinate with OARS, the watershed association for the Assabet River, to monitor water quality in Elizabeth Brook and the Assabet River. We have already begun reviewing publications on resilient parks and recreation facilities for ideas that might be incorporated into our plan such as MAPC's *"Designing Parks and Playground as Green Infrastructure for Stormwater and Climate Resilience"* (2018) and EPA's *"Green Infrastructure in Parks: A Guide to Collaboration, Funding, and Community Engagement"* (2017) and more recent publications from the National Recreation and Park Association.

Components of the Climate Resilience Master Plan are expected to include:

- Identification of no longer needed golf elements for removal (including tee boxes, sand traps, and a ¼ mile long 50' high driving range fence, and restoration of affected areas;
- Restoration of historically altered floodplain, wetlands and stream corridors at the Stow Acres Driving Range and creation of additional flood storage;
- An evaluation of the existing soil morphology to determine whether the soils can be improved to increase carbon sequestration and vegetative diversity (e.g., meadow communities);
- Restoration of riparian corridors along streams, including Elizabeth Brook, and measures designed to increase biodiversity, landscape complexity and habitat values in the upland areas of the property including creation of open meadows and the planting of trees and shrubs adapted to future climate conditions;

- Creation of an accessible recreational trail around the perimeter of the property interconnecting with recreational elements and the planned ~ 3-mile trail at the Stow Acres South Course, along with user facilities like benches, overlooks, and shade structures;
- Integration of resilient recreation facilities incorporating nature-based solutions including water features, tree planting, shade structures, and other elements to help minimize heat island impacts and reduce water use for irrigation. The specific active and passive recreation facilities on the property would be guided by a needs assessment and community survey, as well as public meetings, to be conducted by the town during 2022 as part of the revision of its Open Space and Recreation Plan, and as part of the master planning process and which will also involve outreach to surrounding communities;
- Exploration of the feasibility of water-based recreation through canoe/kayak access to Elizabeth Brook and Wheeler Pond;
- Creation of access and parking to serve the town facilities, including redevelopment of the existing driving range parking lot on Randall Road to serve visitors, with multilingual interpretive elements overlooking the restored driving range. We will also assess the potential for one or more EV charging stations in this parking lot (Stow currently has no charging stations) as well as enhance stormwater recharge;
- Green stormwater measures to manage runoff from any new recreation facilities that are created on the site and encourage stormwater recharge;
- Identification of common invasive species on the site and the development of recommendations for invasive species management;
- A series of climate resilient design standards that will serve to underpin all future use of the site including pervious surfacing, water reuse, rainwater collection, native plantings and other elements;
- Identification of opportunities for interpretive trails, inclusive signage to direct visitors to the property and educational materials to engage those using the property in understanding climate change and the reason for selection of nature-based solutions on the property; and
- A logical and cost-effective phasing plan with next steps and cost estimates where feasible for construction and maintenance of the various elements. This phasing plan will prioritize some “early wins” in terms of enhancing site resilience and providing opportunities for the public to use and enjoy the property during what is expected to be a 10-15 year implementation plan and identify clear metrics for measuring our progress toward implementation of the elements of the Master Plan.

The acquisition and master plan serve as a nature-based solution to climate change by protecting a key large property and establishing a blueprint for the transition from a golf landscape to a more diverse, ecologically sustainable and climate resilient community conservation area and park property.

A. Environmental Co-Benefits

Co-Benefit		Description of how the project will produce this environmental co-benefit
Promotes Biodiversity (habitat restoration, creation, or enhancement)	✓	Plan will include tree/shrub planting areas, open meadow restoration/pollinator gardens, invasive species management, planting of riparian corridors, a wetland restoration project of approximately 12-15 acres, as well as elements to increase structural landscape diversity, including soil assessment, all improving habitat and resilience.
Restores/Remediates Project Site	✓	Managed golf course "turf" to be replaced with native plantings and/or open field habitat, golf elements removed, natural water flows restored by removal of restrictive culverts and wetland restoration. Soil morphology and structure will be examined to evaluate options for improved viability and resilience.
Promotes Environmentally Sustainable Development/Reduces Development in Climate Vulnerable Areas	✓	Overall Stow Acres Plan has located development in least sensitive areas and limited the development footprint to a relatively small area of the larger property, avoiding large scale subdivision of the land. Resilience Master Plan to look at creative, sustainable approaches to limited recreational development, pervious pavers, drought tolerant plants, water reuse, etc.; driving range fill to be removed from floodplain, enhancing both its size and function.
Improved Water Quality and/or Increased Groundwater Recharge	✓	Wetland restoration will enhance recharge of surface water in expanded floodplain, streambank plantings will encourage recharge/reduce runoff, rain gardens will infiltrate runoff, plantings will increase shade and reduce evaporation, elimination of golf turf areas will encourage recharge by slowing the flow of water over more densely vegetated areas. In addition, retirement of the golf course and rainwater collection for onsite use will result in a significant reduction of water withdrawal from the Assabet River.
Improved Air Quality	✓	Retained forest areas and tree/shrub plantings will 'filter' air. Provision of park and open space facilities in proximity to new development reduces vehicle trips by affording close to home, walkable open space opportunities. There are no other large conservation areas with trails which serve this portion of Stow.

Climate Mitigation (carbon sequestration, site-scale improvements for cooling, reduced energy use)	✓	Retention of forested areas and planting of additional trees and shrubs (including climate-adapted species) will capture and store carbon emissions. Shade structures and trees/shrubs will reduce heat impacts for park users, feasibility of EV charging station to be explored at parking lot. The developer of the project that is part of the larger vision will eliminate/minimize the use of fossil fuels for heat/cooling in all units and encourage solar panels. Healthy soils will also contribute to carbon sequestration.
Other Environmental Co-Benefit: Assabet River	✓	The Assabet River is on MA's list of impaired rivers due to high levels of phosphorus. The transition from golf to open space/park areas offers the opportunity to reduce phosphorus loading in the watershed by eliminating golf course fertilizers, creating vegetated river and stream buffers, and reducing runoff into the Assabet River and Elizabeth Brook, its second largest tributary.

4. Environmental Justice and Public/Regional Benefits (14 Points)

While surrounding towns have EJ populations, Stow does not. **As the same time, Stow is very committed to environmental justice, equity, and diversity.** The broad scale of this project, providing ecological restoration to improve ecosystem services and active and passive recreational opportunities, will provide regional benefit to the surrounding communities of Boxboro, Acton, Maynard, Bolton, and Hudson, many of which have EJ populations. Stow expects to engage surrounding communities as part of this project including the Town of Hudson, which is closest to the project site, and the Assabet Valley Boys and Girls Club, based in Maynard. The Nashoba Area Social Justice Alliance has been a strong supporter of the Stow Acres project from the outset, and we also expect to engage them in outreach to their membership. The Troop 1 Boy Scouts, based in Stow, have also committed to this effort. Letters of support from most are included with this application.

Additionally, Stow's over-65 population is its fastest growing population segment and a Climate Vulnerable Population. Census data indicates that households with individuals 65 years of age and older grew from 345 households in 2000, to 604 households in 2010, to 805 households in 2020, and now total nearly one-third of Stow's households. The number of residents over 65 has nearly doubled in the past 10 years and is expected to continue to rise. These residents are susceptible to the impacts of heat, particularly given the findings of the UMass I-CARES Urban Heat Island Dataviewer (2020, referenced on EOEEA's website) which show a large urban heat island in Metrowest Massachusetts, including Stow. These residents desire close to home accessible outdoor recreation opportunities for exercise and health. This unmet need was identified in the town's 2016 Open Space and Recreation Plan and will be a key component of the Plan update in 2023. The town is actively seeking to expand outdoor recreation opportunities for seniors and has just finished constructing a park with an ADA

compliant trail in the center of Stow and made accessibility improvements at the Town Beach. We have recently approved the use of ARPA funds to design raised bed adaptive garden plots at our popular community gardens. Still, we need to do more both for existing residents as well as for the adjacent 180-unit development, which will generate 96 units to be added to the Town's subsidized housing inventory and is designed to appeal to seniors, empty nesters, and young families. Creation of an adjacent conservation and recreation area with trails will help meet their park, recreation, and fitness needs. The project will also afford the community a learning opportunity about the local impacts of climate change, particularly seniors and other Climate Vulnerable Populations.

We will involve seniors and other Climate Vulnerable Population members directly in the development of the Master Plan for Stow Acres. Outreach will occur to Stow's seniors through articles in the Senior Scoop (a monthly Council on Aging newsletter sent to all residents), via a virtual site visit that will allow them to experience the site through a video if they are unable to visit in person (made available on line and on the local Cable TV channel), and through a dedicated public forum that will be held at the Council on Aging to obtain opinions from our seniors on the future uses of the property. We will also dedicate at least 2 seats on the steering committee for representatives of this Climate Vulnerable population and advocates for accessibility.

We will also reach out to surrounding communities to determine to what extent this facility can help meet their park and recreation needs. All our existing conservation properties in Stow receive heavy use from residents in surrounding communities, and we expect that the same would be true of Stow Acres. As part of our community outreach, we will seek to place articles in regional newspapers about this effort and invite regional participation in our community forums. The Town of Hudson has already expressed interest in participating in this effort and sent a letter of support and we expect to work with the Maynard-based Assabet Valley Boys and Girls Club, with whom we already have a summer camp partnership through the Recreation Department.

A. Other Project Co-Benefits

Co-Benefit		Description of how the project will produce this environmental co-benefit
Social	√	The Stow Acres property to be acquired by the Town will become the Town's largest outdoor conservation and recreation facility encouraging people of all ages to explore and enjoy the property and foster social capital through both casual interactions and group programs and activities and activities.
Economic	√	The Town has already hired two seasonal trail stewards to work in Summer 2022 building the trail on the South Course of Stow Acres. It is expected that future similar green jobs would be created in response to site construction and maintenance needs on the North Property and there would also be opportunities for volunteer engagement. The economic benefits to communities

		of park and open space areas are well documented generally, and the availability of open space, trails, farms, etc. In Stow is a key draw for both residents and visitors and helps support local businesses, particularly those who offer meals and supplies to day-trippers.
Public Health	√	Trails and outdoor passive and active recreation facilities will encourage health and fitness and support an active lifestyle for residents of the neighborhood, town, and beyond. Shade structures and water features will provide cooling features to offset the impacts of heat islands.
Recreational	√	Long distance interconnected recreational trails totaling approximately 2.5 miles on the Town's North Property and 3 miles on the South Course will encourage use and enjoyment of the property, with shorter accessible loops available.
Public Access	√	Trails will allow access to the entire site and foster water access for fishing and small craft to Elizabeth Brook. The development of accessible trails on a significant part of the North Property is a priority. Parking areas at the restored driving range will allow visitors from within and outside Stow to visit the property – and offer both visual (overlook) and physical access to the land.
Equity	√	Creation of a park and open space area on this property will provide close to home access to outdoor recreation and activities in a portion of the town identified in the Open Space and Recreation Plan as the “Underserved Quadrant” of Stow, currently deficient in conservation areas compared with the rest of the town and facing significant new development pressure. This area currently lacks access to walkable park and recreation opportunities. Broader scale, the modest and diverse housing offerings provide opportunity for enhanced economic diversity in Stow.
Regional Benefits	√	As part of the planning, we will formally reach out to Harvard, Acton, Maynard, Boxboro, Hudson, and Bolton to identify needs and opportunities for partnerships on the land. The scale of this property is expected to draw users from all our surrounding communities and beyond and provide learning opportunities regarding climate resilience and landscape restoration.

5. Public Involvement and Community Engagement (12 Points)

From the outset, the Stow Acres project has involved extensive public involvement and engagement. With most of the partnership's work over the past two years occurring in the COVID-19 era, the project team took to Zoom in a series of three widely advertised (press releases, flyers, newspaper, social

media) community forums to let the public know about the effort, solicit their feedback on the planning for the site and the proposed development, and prepare for the two successful Town Meeting votes. Each of these sessions included approximately 100-200 residents and ample time for questions and answers. The team also conducted a focus group session via Zoom on the proposed development with approximately 20 residents representing a cross-section of the community. A dedicated series of webpages on the Stow Acres effort can be found on the front page of the Town's website at <https://www.stow-ma.gov/stow-acres-open-space-recreation-and-housing-page> and a dedicated email address provides residents with a single point of contact for comments and questions given the involvement of multiple departments. The fact that both Town Meeting votes, to spend a total of \$4.0 million in CPA funds, were nearly unanimous is testimony to the strength of public engagement and support for this project.

The various departments involved in this effort are committed to maintaining – and enhancing – the public outreach for this project during the Climate Resilience Master Planning phase of the project. We seek to genuinely engage the community in envisioning the future uses of Stow Acres. This process will be starting as soon as this summer when we do a community survey for our Open Space and Recreation Plan Update and ask several questions regarding the desired future open space and recreational uses of the Stow Acres North Property. While we have identified a series of methods of engagement for the Climate Resilience Master Planning process, we also would like to leave the door open for our consultant to work with the Steering Committee to add additional engagement methods. For example, we are intrigued by the use of asynchronous focus groups by the MVP 2.0 Planning Process to reach those who do not have the time to attend meetings or who have an engagement style that means that they are less likely to attend or speak up at meetings. We are also currently exploring ways to involve local schools and scouts in this effort and committed to doing that as part of the BioBlitz to take place during the Site Characterization Phase of the Master Plan.

Proposed Community Engagement Plan Elements – Climate Resilience Master Plan

1. Core Project Team – day to day oversight of project
2. Steering Committee with Monthly Meetings – made of up officials, neighbors, partners, with at least 2 dedicated seats for climate vulnerable residents
3. Digital outreach
 - a. Website
 - b. Dedicated email address for project
 - c. Social media
 - d. Cable TV – 2 videos, including “Virtual Visit” using on the ground and drone footage to allow the public “access” to the site via Stow TV and social media.
 - e. Creation of Public Digital Vision Board (Miro or Similar) and/or similar method of asynchronous remote engagement (to be developed in concert with the consulting team)
4. Print Outreach
 - a. Newspaper articles about process for local and regional newspapers
 - b. Stow Acres flyer mailed to all residents with tax bills
 - c. White paper/article about overall collaborative planning approach to the property
 - d. Stow Conservation Trust mailing to residents and members

- e. Articles in COA's Senior Scoop Newsletter and Recreation Department newsletter
5. In Person Engagement
- a. In-person and/or Zoom Public Forums (at least 3)
 - b. Senior-Focused Forum at Council on Aging
 - c. Public Community Walks on the Property in Spring 2023 and Fall 2023
 - d. Bioblitz at the property to gather natural resource information and photos

Public Involvement and Community Engagement Plan Table

	Print	Digital	In-Person
Principal Strategies	<p>Bimonthly Articles in newspaper</p> <p>Stow Acres flyer in tax bills in Summer 2023</p> <p>White paper about acquisition/partnership</p> <p>Utilize the Town's Public Relations firm to create targeted pieces on Stow Acres, the overall project, and the resiliency efforts</p>	<p>Website/feedback portal to dedicated email address</p> <p>2 cable TV programs about Stow Acres to be aired on cable TV.</p> <p>Virtual Vision Board</p>	<p>In Person and/or Zoom public forums for public -input to plan -draft plan -final plan</p> <p>In person walks at the property</p> <p>Lessons Learned Slide show on partnership and proactive outreach to and engagement with owner shared with regional Open Space Committees, Metrowest Conservation Alliance, MACC, MLTC, Mass Society of Conservation Professionals, MAPC/MAGIC</p>
Assisting Strategies	<p>SCT mailing to members</p> <p>Articles in Recreation Department newsletter</p>	<p>All Steering Committee notes and meeting materials will be posted on the Town website</p> <p>Ongoing social media posts - Facebook, Instagram</p>	<p>"Bioblitz" type event to gather site resource information and photos</p> <p>Steering Committee Meetings</p> <p>Regular updates provided at public Select Board, Conservation Commission, Recreation, and Planning Board Meetings</p>
Equitable Engagement Modifiers	<p>2 articles sent to <i>regional</i> papers – one on acquisition and</p>	<p>Virtual Site Visit produced by Stow TV, using drone and</p>	<p>Dedicated COA Forum – show virtual site visit and discuss senior needs and goals for property</p>

	one on master planning process	on the ground footage	At least 2 Seats on the Steering Committee for EJ or Climate Vulnerable residents
	Articles in Senior Scoop (COA publication)		
How community feedback will be incorporated into project and mechanism by which results will be shared:	Public input will be accepted by email throughout the process and at public forums. Ideas and notes from all meetings and forums will be posted on the website, and the public will also be invited to share ideas on a virtual Vision Board for the project. All ideas will be reviewed by the Steering Committee and consulting team and incorporated as appropriate into a Draft Master Plan, on which another round of public comment and discussion will be sought. As noted above, in addition to the specific strategies in this table, we would like to leave room for the consultant to identify one or two other creative engagement techniques like asynchronous focus groups to obtain feedback from individuals that do not normally attend meetings.		

6. Project Transferability, Measurement of Success and Maintenance (8 Points)

A. Project Transferability:

As noted above, we believe that the larger project is already a model for all Massachusetts cities and towns for a collaborative approach in working proactively to ensure protection of a top priority property, rather than waiting for it to become available via the Chapter 61 process or the filing of plans for development. The Town has worked in partnership with Stow Conservation Trust, the owner, and a developer to craft a vision for the land, create consensus around this vision, and build support for the expenditure of significant CPA funds to achieve the desired outcome. Smaller, more energy efficient homes are to be built on much smaller lots, reflecting an innovative approach that absolutely can be replicated elsewhere. We are already sharing this approach with other communities at workshops, conferences, and meetings in the hope of inspiring them to take on something bigger than they ever thought they could accomplish. On May 3, we presented the project to a meeting of our MAPC subregion (MAGIC) and this summer we will have a similar presentation to statewide Conservation Agents. We will continue to seek out opportunities to share our successful creative approach with the Mass Association of Conservation Commissions, Mass Land Trust Coalition, Land Trust Alliance, Metrowest Conservation Alliance, and similar groups. To facilitate this, we will develop a “lessons learned” slide presentation and a white paper project summary that can be shared with other communities (and placed on the website) that are facing defining moments as large or expensive properties are changing hands and facing development. We will also encourage our private partners – a golf course owner and a developer – to share our story of success within their own networks (e.g., golf and development communities).

Once we protect the land, the logical next step is to develop a comprehensive plan for the restoration and public use of the property centered around climate resilience. We do not want to

proceed with scattered efforts to restore or manage the property without an overarching plan for the land to guide our efforts. We have reviewed recent MVP projects on a golf course in Northampton and the work to design a plan for Moakley Park in Boston for ideas to incorporate in our planning and hope to build on this work and inspire other communities with our efforts. We seek to employ both proven simple techniques like streambank plantings to improve water quality, and also to look at measures that would allow a small portion of the land to be used to for resilient recreation facilities – employing measures like drought resistant grasses, water re-use, and low impact stormwater management to allow such facilities to lie “lightly on the land” compared with similar more traditional facilities. Our plan will guide the process of transforming a promising, but somewhat degraded golf course landscape into a more resilient one and provide enhanced connectivity across Stow’s landscape. As with the acquisition, we will seek opportunities to share the approach that we are taking within the conservation and recreation communities and at regional forums. We will also maintain a library of all documents generated on the town’s website so that they are available to others, and fully participate in MVP forums and other networking events. Given the number of golf courses in Massachusetts (and beyond) that are likely to go out of business in the coming decade and the strong possibility that a significant number of these will be considered for purchase for open space, we think that there will be ample opportunity for communities to learn from our experience.

Stow is very committed to the goals of the MVP program:

- We have been working to implement our 2018 MVP plan and have already begun the process of updating this plan;
- We have also been working on several regional climate initiatives including a 2017 regional plan prepared by MAGIC, our MAPC subregion;
- Town staff have played a leadership role in creating a SuAsCo Climate Resiliency Coalition, working with the nonprofit advocacy group OARS;
- We are just wrapping up a 2-year MVP Action Grant focused on Lake Boon; and
- We have a new and active Green Advisory Committee, created by the Town in 2021, containing representatives of key boards and departments which is in the process of developing a Climate Action Plan for Stow.

B. Measurements of Success:

The most direct measure of our success will be maintaining an engaged, enthusiastic community that supports the implementation of the Master Plan financially at Town Meeting, through a willingness to expend future Community Preservation funds to carry out elements of the project and/or provide matching funds for grants for wetland restoration, signage, trail, and facility construction, etc.

Beyond that, we include in the Master Plan a restoration and construction phasing sequence and timetable with clear definable outcomes. This might include (for example) metrics such as acres of new vegetated wetland or cubic feet of floodplain restored, linear feet of public access trail constructed, number of trees/shrubs planted and survival rates, linear feet of stream bank restoration, volunteer hours at the site, and number of users to the site. Such metrics could be

tracked annually by town officials and partners as we implement the master plan and monitor progress toward our goals.

C. Maintenance:

Following the completion of the Master Plan for the site, we anticipate that the Project Management Team will continue to meet regularly to carry out the vision in the Master Plan. The Town Administrator will play a key role in coordinating among Department Heads and ensuring that project commitments are met and moving forward on schedule. The following are anticipated next steps with that effort:

- 1) Design and Permitting: Various elements of the project will require more detailed design and engineering plans that are consistent with the Master Plan so that we can move forward with permitting and construction. These include wetland restoration, site access, accessible trails and boardwalks, and any facilities. Anticipated permits might include a Notice of Intent with the Conservation Commission and possible Planning Board or Zoning Board approvals. The wetland restoration portion of the project is also likely to require state and federal water quality/wetlands permitting.
- 2) Maintenance: Once the Town takes title to the property, we will have responsibilities for site management over a gradually increasing portion of the site. Primary responsibility for this would fall to the Conservation and Recreation Departments. For both, this is a significant addition to their land maintenance and stewardship responsibilities. Both departments will be responsible for working with the Town Administrator to ensure that needed budget funds are in place to carry out these management responsibilities. We will want to ensure ongoing maintenance of the town's property during the implementation phase. We anticipate that invasive species management would begin at this time and be carried out by Conservation Department staff, supplemented by volunteers as needed. We have already negotiated with Stow Acres a commitment to mow the town's property to keep invasive species down at a frequency interval of the town's choosing during this transition phase and anticipate that open areas would be mowed at least once annually for the short term, outside of bird nesting season.
- 3) Seek Funding for Initial Project Elements – Additional funding will be needed for some of the project elements such as wetland restoration, trail construction, restoration plantings, and construction of site access and initial facilities. We will seek out opportunities to apply for available funds through the Division of Ecological Restoration, MVP Program, PARC Grants, Recreational Trail Grants, and any other appropriate funds, including Stow Community Preservation Funds and appropriations of other available local funds as needed for match. Our next funding opportunity following completion of the Plan would be either a 2024 Special Town Meeting (fall) or Annual Town Meeting in 2025. However, if there is broad consensus on implementation of certain elements of the draft Plan, we could consider bringing them to Annual Town Meeting in May 2024. As is the case with any capital improvement, the Town Administrator, Finance Committee and Capital Planning Committee ensure that an Operations and Maintenance Plan is in place for the long-term care of the asset to be constructed.

7. Need for Financial Assistance (6 Points)

Voters in Stow have dug deep into local Community Preservation Funds to secure this once in a lifetime opportunity to protect Stow Acres, covering 100% of the cost of the South Course Conservation Restriction and 70% of the cost of the Stow Acres North Property. However, the Town Meeting vote to acquire the North Property is contingent on finding the remaining \$1,035,000 from other funding sources. The amount spent on this project locally makes it the most expensive land acquisition in the town's history. While SCT is helping with fundraising, they are an all-volunteer land trust without the ability to raise funds of this magnitude. State grant funding is key to the success of this project.

Stow's Community Preservation Fund has been depleted at a time when there are other needs for historic preservation and affordable housing projects and needs time to recover through the collection of new funds. In addition, as a community we are facing significant short-term expenditures for Lake Boon dam repairs, rehabilitation of our historic Town Hall, a new/renovated High School, and PFAS remediation. We are also facing several very large and significant developments in the southwest corner of Town whose open space and recreational needs will be met by this project. The Town explored funding for Stow Acres through the LWCF grant program, however, it was concluded after discussions with Melissa Cryan and Bob O'Connor, the state's review appraiser, that the complex Yellow Book appraisal methodology required by the federal government would be a significant obstacle to funding, given the need to also value all surrounding lands in common ownership. From the Town's perspective, obtaining MVP funding and preparing the Climate Resilience Master Plan sets us on a trajectory to ensure that the principles of resilience underpin future use and development of this property, which is logical given its size, its location between two significant river systems, and the potential for meaningful enhancement of climate resilience on the property.

8. Project Feasibility, Support and Management (6 Points)

The Town of Stow and its partners have the technical, financial, and management capacity to carry out this project. We have already worked over the past two years to develop a vision for the property, obtain positive Town Meeting votes, and protect the South Course with a Conservation Restriction. The Town has already voted to provide 70% of the acquisition cost and town staff are committed to put in the time to carry out the match portions of this Master Planning effort. The original partners (Town, Trust, Stow Acres ownership, and the developer) continue to meet monthly to ensure that all project elements are on track.

The Project Management Team include the following individuals:

- Denise Demboski – Stow Town Administrator – 27 years of experience in town leadership and financial and contract management positions, extensively engaged in Stow Acres project, including land negotiations, attendance at team meetings, coordination of department heads working on project, and keeping the Select Board apprised of the project
- Kathy Sferra – Stow Conservation Director – Project Manager - 35+ years of experience in land use planning, wetlands protection, land and conservation restriction stewardship, project management and community facilitation and consensus building.

- Jesse Steadman – Stow Town Planner - 15+ years of experience in land use and transportation planning, conservation, community engagement and project management.
- Laura Greenough – Stow Recreation Director - 20+ years of experience in Recreation Programming, facility management, project management and community outreach.
- Bob Wilber, President, Stow Conservation Trust – 30+ Years of experience in land acquisition, project management, land trust leadership. Key project partner.
- Ingeborg Hegemann Clark, Stow Conservation Commission (Retired Executive Vice-President and Manager of Ecological Sciences, BSC Group) – 30+ years of experience on municipal conservation commissions, wetland delineation and replication/restoration design, project, and contract management. Ingeborg is a member of Conservation Commission and volunteering her time to this initiative.

Letters of support have been included with this application from diverse entities including Town Boards and Committees, Stow Conservation Trust (also committing to their match), OARS, our state delegation, development partner and more.

The Town of Stow has an existing MVP Action Grant for the Healthy Lake Boon project which is expected to be complete prior to the commencement of this project, and which will not affect our capacity to carry out this project. We have enjoyed our collaboration with the MVP program staff on that project and look forward to a successful second action grant application.

Thank you for your consideration of our application. We know that we are biased, but we think that Stow Acres is an incredibly exciting project, and one which can be held up as a statewide model of proactive planning for important properties, integration of conservation and community housing on a meaningful scale, and the restoration of a climate resilient landscape. We know that much work lies ahead of us and we are committed to seeing it through and working with the MVP Program and our regional coordinator in the coming months and years.

Attachments:

- Transmittal Letter from Town Administrator/Commitment to Match
- Attachment B: Scope/Budget Spreadsheet
- Attachment C: Required Information for Design, Permitting and Construction Projects/Locus Maps 1 and 2 and Site Photographs
- Attachment D: MVP Yearly Progress Report
- Town Meeting Vote
- Map 3 showing Climate Resilient Master Planning Area
- Map 4 showing Wetland and Floodplain Resources
- Stow Acres North Appraisal
- Packet of Letters of Support and Commitment Letters from Stow Conservation & Recreation to Resilience Goals

Stow_Stow Acres North_FY23\FY24 MVP Action Grant Scope/Budget

Review the list of instructions on the "Instructions" tab to understand how to use this spreadsheet.

Project Task Description	Deliverables	Approximate Start Date	Approximate End Date	Total Grant	In-Kind Match	Cash Match	Total Match	Total Project Cost
Tasks to be Completed by June 30, 2023								
Task 1: Project Kick-off, Management, and Reporting								
Sub-task 1.1 Kick-off meeting with Town, EEA, and Consultant	Meeting notes, sign-in sheet	Within 30 days of contract	Within 30 days of contract	\$ -	\$ 580.00	\$ -	\$ 580.00	\$680.00
Sub-task 1.2 Monthly progress reports FY23 (template provided)	Monthly progress reports submitted by the 30th of each month of the grant period to your MVP Regional Coordinator	1st of each month beginning within 30 days of contract	30-Jun-23	\$ -	\$ 384.00	\$ -	\$ 384.00	\$384.00
Sub-task 1.3 Budget, Time, and Financial Tracking	Reimbursement Requests to EOEAA	Ongoing	30-Jun-23	\$ -	\$ 1,008.00	\$ -	\$ 1,008.00	\$1,008.00
Sub-task 1.4 Monthly Meetings of Acquisition Project Management Team (as needed)	Meeting notes	Ongoing	30-Jan-23	\$ -	\$ 632.00	\$ -	\$ 632.00	\$632.00
Total Task 1 Cost:				\$ -	\$ 2,604.00	\$ -	\$ 2,604.00	\$2,604.00
Task 2: Public Involvement and Community Engagement in FY23								
Sub-task 2.1 Initial Meeting of Master Planning Project Management Team	[copy FY23 tasks from your public involvement and community engagement plan (Question 5 in the application) here]							
Sub-task 2.2 Create/Maintain Master Planning Website on Town Site	Meeting notes and attendee list	1/6/2023	1/30/2023	\$ -	\$ 580.00	\$ -	\$ 580.00	\$580.00
Sub-task 2.3 Identify Steering Committee Members/Hold at Least Three Meetings/Prepare Notes	Screenshot of Webpages	1/6/2023	1/30/2023	\$ -	\$ 480.00	\$ -	\$ 480.00	\$480.00
Sub-task 2.4 Conduct Two Community Site Visits/Advise/Write Up Notes	Meeting notes, attendance lists, EEA invited	1/6/2023	6/30/2023	\$ -	\$ 3,283.00	\$ -	\$ 3,283.00	\$3,283.00
Sub-task 2.5 Create Virtual Site Visit with Slow TV	Site Visit Summary notes, EEA invited	3/1/2023	4/30/2023	\$ -	\$ 914.00	\$ -	\$ 914.00	\$914.00
Total Task 2 Cost:	Copy of Video	3/1/2023	4/30/2023	\$ -	\$ 1,860.00	\$ -	\$ 1,860.00	\$1,860.00
				\$ -	\$ 7,117.00	\$ -	\$ 7,117.00	\$7,117.00
Task 3: Project Site Acquisition								
Sub-task 3.1 Property Closing	Copy of Recorded Documents, Settlement Sheets	12/1/2022	12/31/2022	\$ 866.00	\$ 866.00	\$ 2,575,000.00	\$ 2,575,866.00	\$3,535,866.00
Total Task 3 Cost:				\$ 866.00	\$ 866.00	\$ 2,575,000.00	\$ 2,575,866.00	\$3,535,866.00
Task 4: Outreach regarding Project Significance/Transferability								
Sub-task 4.1 Prepare Project Summary Case Study Powerpoint and White Paper	Copy of Powerpoint and White Paper	12/1/2022	6/30/2023	\$ -	\$ 686.00	\$ -	\$ 686.00	\$686.00
Sub-task 4.2 Present at 2-3 Statewide/Regional Forums (e.g. MLTC/MCA/etc)	Conference Information	12/1/2022	6/30/2023	\$ -	\$ 736.00	\$ -	\$ 736.00	\$736.00
Total Task 4 Cost:				\$ -	\$ 1,422.00	\$ -	\$ 1,422.00	\$1,422.00
Task 5: Consultant Selection								
Sub-task 5.1 Develop and Review RFP/Issue RFP/Select Consultant	RFP/Contract	2/1/2023	6/30/2023	\$ -	\$ 3,513.00	\$ -	\$ 3,513.00	\$3,513.00
Total Task 5 Cost:				\$ -	\$ 3,513.00	\$ -	\$ 3,513.00	\$3,513.00
TOTAL PROJECT COST FY23								
				\$ 960,000.00	\$ 15,522.00	\$ 2,575,000.00	\$ 2,589,100.00	\$ 3,549,100.00

Tasks to be Completed by June 30, 2024								
Task 6: Project Management and Reporting								
Sub-task 6.1 Monthly progress reports FY24 (template provided)	Monthly progress reports submitted by the 30th of each month of the grant period to your MVP Regional Coordinator	7/1/2023	6/30/2024	\$ -	\$ 576.00	\$ -	\$ 576.00	\$576.00
Sub-task 6.2 Project Case Study (template provided)	Final Case Study Report, PowerPoint slide, project photos	4/1/2023	6/30/2024	\$ -	\$ 338.00	\$ -	\$ 338.00	\$338.00
Sub-task 6.3 Budget, Time, and Financial Tracking	Reimbursement Requests to EOEAA	7/1/2023	6/30/2024	\$ -	\$ 1,440.00	\$ -	\$ 1,440.00	\$1,440.00
Sub-task 6.4 Monthly Meetings of Project Management Team	Meeting Notes	7/1/2023	6/30/2024	\$ -	\$ 3,092.00	\$ -	\$ 3,092.00	\$3,092.00
Total Task 6 Cost:				\$ -	\$ 5,446.00	\$ -	\$ 5,446.00	\$5,446.00
Task 7: Public Involvement and Community Engagement in FY24								
Sub-task 7.1 Master Planning Kickoff with Consultant and Steering Committee/EEA	[copy FY24 tasks from your public involvement and community engagement plan (Question 5 in the application) here]							
	Notes and attendee list, EEA staff invited to all meetings	7/1/2023	8/15/2023	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,128.00	\$ -	\$ 1,128.00	\$2,128.00

**Attachment C: Required Information for Design, Permitting, and Construction Projects
MUNICIPAL VULNERABILITY PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM FY 23**

**MVP ACTION GRANT
RFR ENV 23 MVP 02**

This attachment is required for all projects that contain design, permitting, or construction components.

1. Project Location Map, Plans, and Site Photographs

1.1. The ownership of the project site is held by:

Municipality

Private - NOTE: P&S in process from Stow Acres and expected to be signed 5/22. Acquisition will result in municipal ownership.

Non-Profit

State

Federal

Multiple Owner Types (*please list*):

1.2. Please provide a project locus map(s) with:

- Site address: 0 Randall Road, Stow [42.4185824474784, -71.53103593282594]
- Site-specific location of project (include street names or other identifying features of project location). Add geographic coordinates (if possible). See here for guidance on getting coordinates.

1.3. Attach relevant supporting materials as PDF documents (studies, plans, design specifications, as applicable).

1.4. Attach site photographs to document existing field conditions and features (as applicable). [Attached]

2. Anticipated Approvals and Agency Coordination. Please consult the Environmental Permitting in Massachusetts guide for guidance on the questions below.

2.1. What planning phase best describes the overall current status of the proposed project?

Preliminary Design and Project Planning [Acquisition and Master Planning]

Permitting and Final Design

Construction, Installation, and/or Monitoring

2.2. Will the project include alteration of a wetland or waterway*?

No

Yes. If yes, please attach any relevant correspondence or a project understanding statement regarding the anticipated regulatory processes for this project.

**Wetland and waterway can encompass any bank, freshwater or coastal wetlands, beach, dune, flat, marsh, or land bordering the ocean, estuary, creek, river, stream, pond, or lake, and also includes land under the water bodies listed above, land subject to tidal action, land subject to coastal storm flowage or flooding, and riverfront area. More information and definitions of the areas listed above can be found here ([310 CMR 10.00](#))*

2.3. For coastal projects, has the Applicant consulted or held a pre-filing meeting with the MA Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM)?

N/A

No

Yes

Please identify when the pre-filing meeting occurred and/or attach a copy of all comment letters received.

2.4. Does the project meet or exceed any of the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) review thresholds (301 CMR 11.03) found [here](#)?

No

Yes

If yes, has the Applicant held a pre-filing meeting with the MEPA Office or completed MEPA review?

No Yes.

Please identify when the pre-filing meeting occurred and/or attached a copy of the MEPA Certificate and all comment letters received.

2.5. Is any portion of the proposed project located within a designated Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)? Map of ACEC can be found [here](#).

No

Yes. ACEC Name: _____

2.6. For dam projects, is it identified on Department of Ecological Restoration (DER)'s Restoration Potential Model Tool?

No

Yes. Project ID #: _____

2.7. Are contaminated soils present on the site?

No

Yes. Please explain plan to address: _____

2.8. Is any part of the project site protected under Article 97?

X No [Not at this time]

Yes. Please explain compliance: _____

2.9. Please review and complete the tables below to indicate whether environmental or construction permits, licenses, and/or approvals are anticipated or have been filed/secured. Please attach copies of all agency correspondence or obtained permits. If you are applying for a construction project, all necessary permits and permissions should be secured.

Environmental Permits / Licenses / Approvals	Required (Y/N)	Filing Date	Issue/Decision Date
MEPA Review (ENF or EIR)	N		
Waterways (Chapter 91)	N		
Wetlands Protection Act (Order of Conditions, Request for Determination of Applicability, etc.)	N		
Army Corps (USACE) Permit (Section 10 or 404)	N		
CZM Federal Consistency Review	N		
Chapter 91 Waterways Permit or License	N		
Water Quality Certification	N		
Endangered Species Consultation (State or Federal)	N		
Water Management Act Permit	N		
Dam Safety Chapter 253 Permit	N		
MHC Historic Review (including Underwater Historical Resources)	N		
MassDOT permits	N		
Other:			

Municipal or Special District Coordination Considerations			
Construction Permits and Approvals	Required (Y/N)	Filing Date	Issue/Anticipated Issue Date
Planning Board	N		
Conservation Commission	N		
Zoning Board	N		
Sewer Extension Permit	N		
Utility Relocation	N		
Local Historical Commission	N		
Public Water Supply Tie-in	N		
Public Wastewater Tie-in	N		
Other:			

Please note that permitting is not part of the current project application. Permitting will be required at later phases of project implementation.

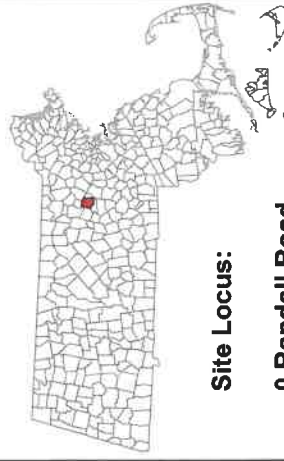


Town of Stow
stow-ma.gov

Stow Acres

Open Space, Recreation,
& Housing Project

Map 1 Locus Map



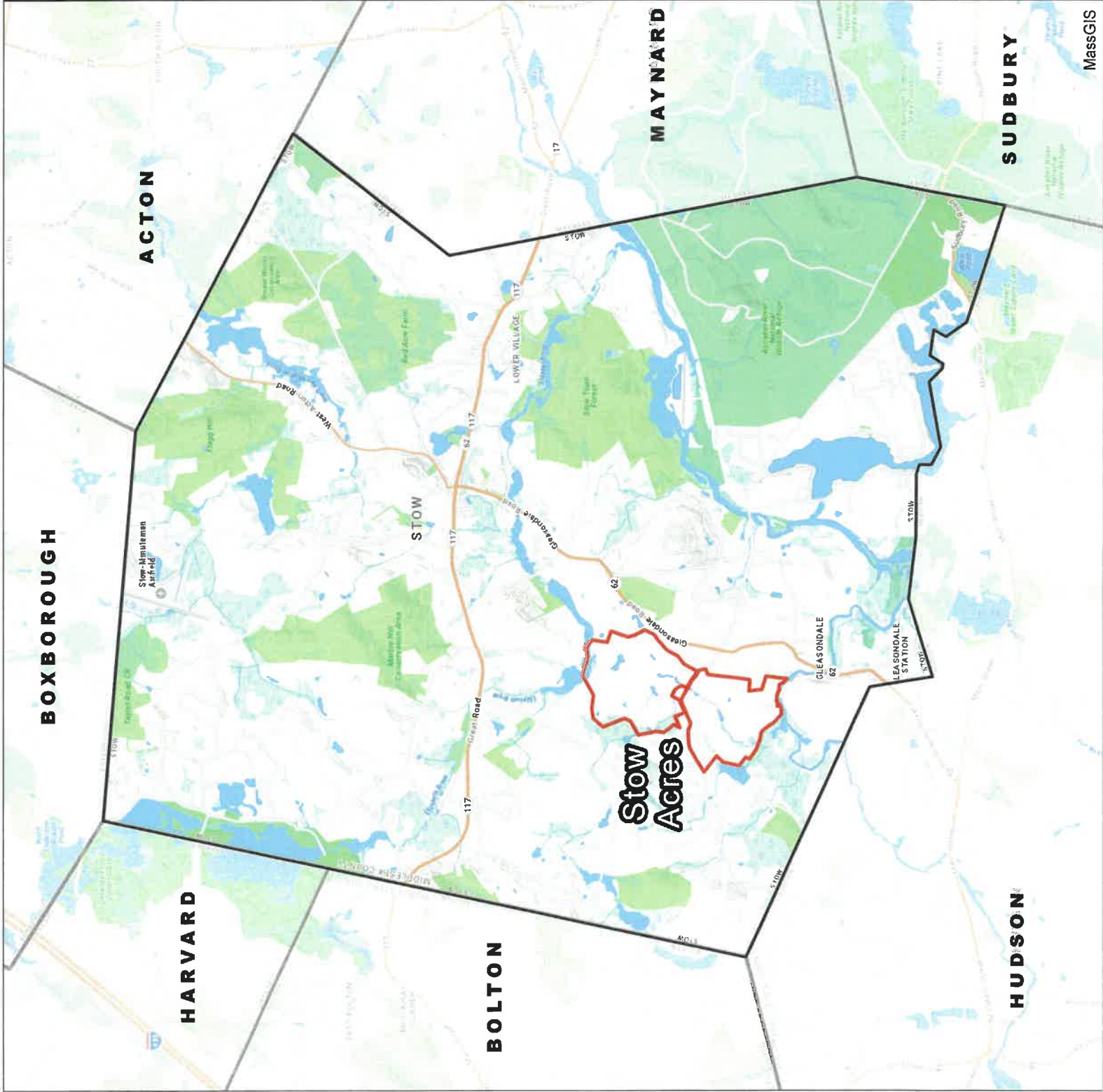
Site Locus:

0 Randall Road

**42.4185824474784,
-71.53103593282594**



Sources: Town of Stow, MassGIS
Coordinate System:
NAD 1983 State Plane Massachusetts
Mainland FIPS 2001 (Meter)
Map Created: 4/27/2022 by M Ragan



MassGIS



Stow Acres

Open Space, Recreation,
& Housing Project

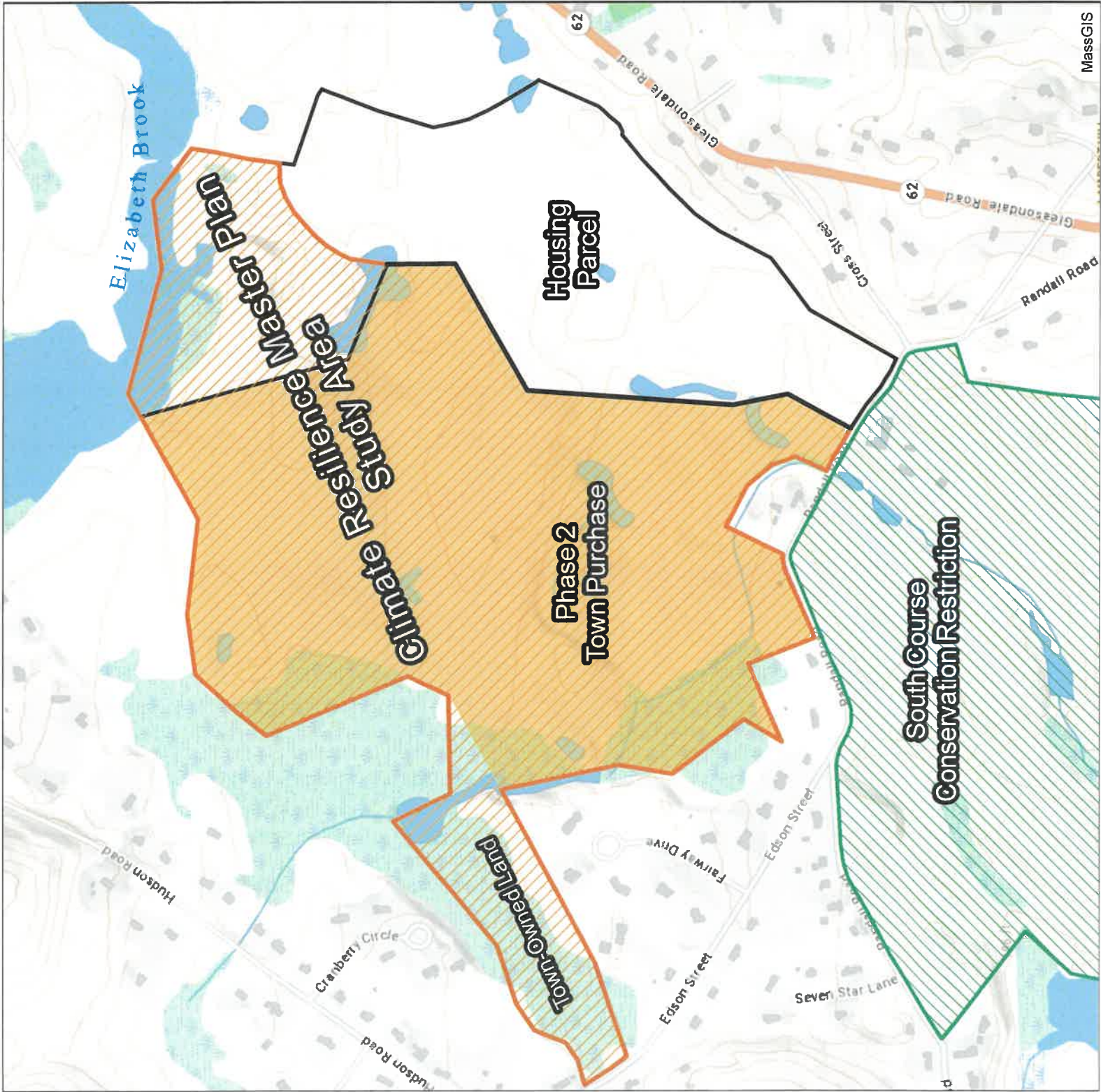
Map 3

Climate Resilience
Master Planning Locus

-  Climate Resilience Master Plan
-  Phase 2 Town Purchase
-  Housing Parcel
-  South Course Conservation Restriction



Sources: Town of Stow, MassGIS
Coordinate System:
NAD 1983 State Plane Massachusetts
Mainland FIPS 2001 (Meter)
Map Created: 4/27/2022 by M Ragan





Town of Stow
stow-ma.gov




Stow Acres

Open Space, Recreation,
& Housing Project

Map 4 Flood Plain

FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer

Flood Zone Designations

-  AE: 1% Annual Chance of Flooding, with BFE
-  AE: Regulatory Floodway
-  X: 0.2% Annual Chance of Flooding

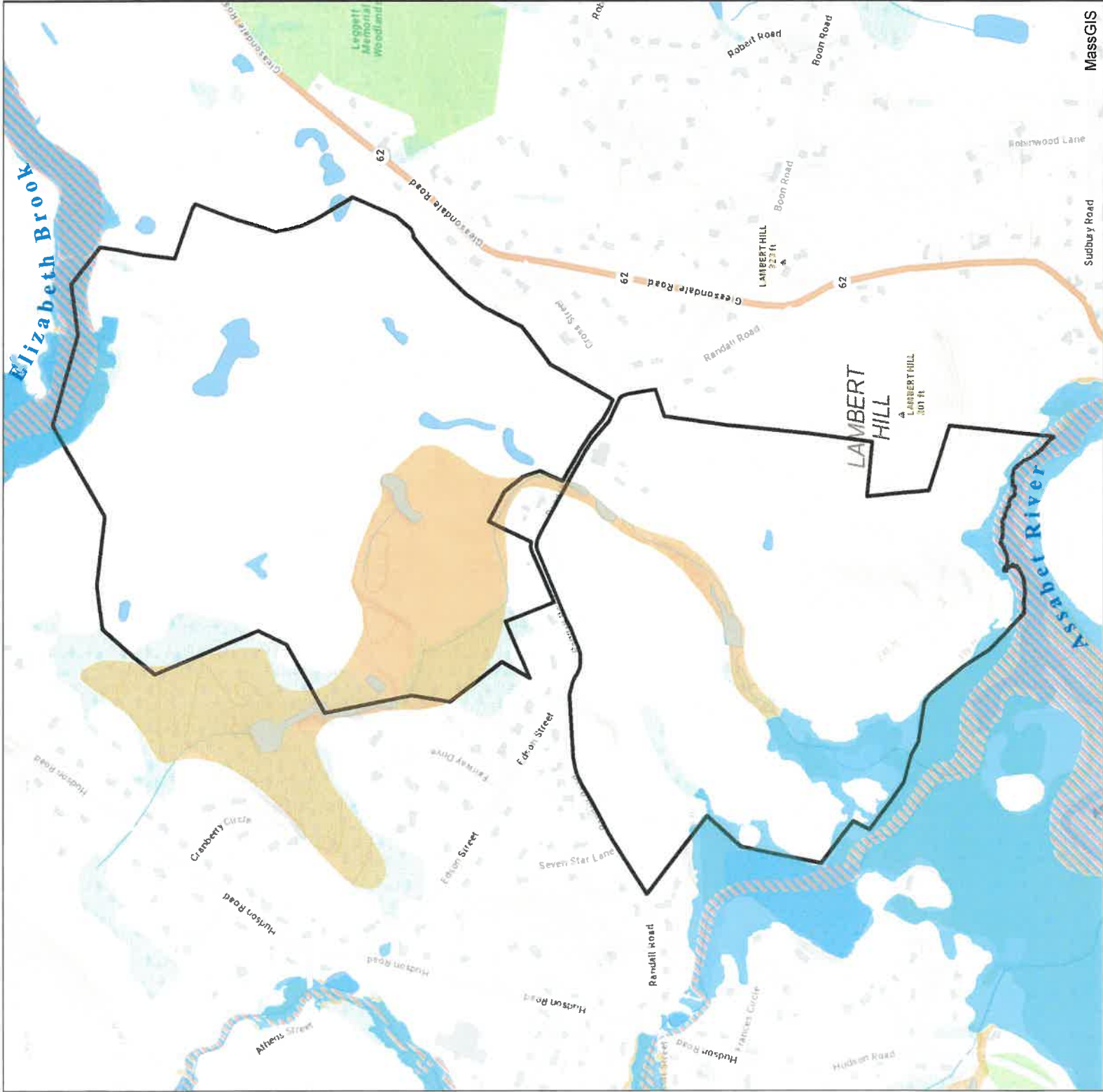


Sources: Town of Stow, MassGIS

Coordinate System:

NAD 1983 State Plane Massachusetts
Mainland FIPS 2001 (Meter)

Map Created: 5/4/2022 by M Ragan



MassGIS

**Stow Acres North
Site Photographs**



Walking path in area planned for restoration



**Looping path near
wetland below**



**Wetland near
restoration
area/property line**



Woodland & Pond
where
plantings/restoration
could enhance water
quality

Wetland in NW corner of
property



Elizabeth Brook Corridor at Rear of Property



Photos of Driving Range showing netting on west side, stream corridor, adjacent beaver swamp





Additional photos of driving range area, and historical alteration of hydrology







The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
MASSACHUSETTS SENATE

SENATOR JAMES B. ELDRIDGE
Middlesex and Worcester District

STATE HOUSE, ROOM 511C
BOSTON, MA 02133-1053
TEL: (617)722-1120
FAX: (617)722-1089

JAMES.ELDRIDGE@MASENATE.GOV
WWW.MASENATE.GOV

Chair
JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
Vice Chair
JOINT COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT,
NATURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURE

DISTRICT OFFICE
225 MAIN STREET, ROOM 106
MARLBOROUGH, MA 01752

April 28, 2022

Kara Runsten
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02114

Re: Town of Stow MVP Grant Application for Stow Acres North

Dear Ms. Runsten,

I write to express my support for the Town of Stow's MVP Action Grant Application for Stow Acres North. Stow is applying for a two-year grant for acquisition of 115 acres of the Stow Acres North Course and the preparation of a Resilience Master Plan to guide the town's future use and restoration of the property.

Stow Acres is the largest remaining property in Stow and the town is engaged in an extraordinary partnership to protect the majority of the land, involving a collaborative planning effort with Stow Conservation Trust, the golf course owner, and a developer.

This grant will provide the town with the opportunity to create a more resilient landscape in the heart of Stow and in the Assabet River Watershed. Given the size of the property it's also highly likely to draw visitors from surrounding communities offering a regional trail and park destination.

This climate change and resilience project received overwhelming support at Stow Town Meeting on two different occasions for the two phases, and the town is providing a match well in excess of the required 25 percent.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and I hope that the Town of Stow's MVP grant application will be given full consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions about my support of this project

Sincerely,

James B. Eldridge
State Senator
Middlesex & Worcester District



THE MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
REPRESENTATIVE KATE HOGAN
THIRD MIDDLESEX DISTRICT
STATE HOUSE, ROOM 370, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02133-1053

April 29, 2022

Kara Runsten, Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program Manager
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Boston MA 02114

**RE: Town of Stow – Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program –
Application for Funding – Stow Acres North**

Dear Program Manager Runsten,

As both the State Representative for Stow and a longtime resident, I write to you in support of the Town of Stow's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant application for the Stow Acres North Acquisition Project.

For decades, residents of Stow have been concerned about the future of Stow Acres, the Town's largest (36 hole) golf course and the largest undeveloped parcel in Stow. This 360-acre property contains significant opportunities for large-scale conservation and restoration. The Town is engaged in an extraordinary partnership to protect the majority of the land involving a collaborative planning effort with Stow Conservation Trust, the golf course owner, and a private developer. Together, the partnership has identified priority locations to focus development and conservation efforts and come up with an impressive plan that will support future trails, recreation facilities, restored wetlands and streams, and conserved corridors along Elizabeth Brook and the Assabet River.

The Town has already paid the entire cost of the Stow Acres South Course acquisition, however the North Course purchase will only occur if Stow is able to raise the necessary funds. Toward that end, they are seeking \$1 million in MVP Action Grant funds for the purchase of 115 acres of the Stow Acres North Course. These funds will be combined with \$2.5 million from Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds, already approved by the voters, and private fundraising by Stow Conservation Trust to meet the \$3.535 million purchase price for this property and cover expenses associated with the closing.

The Stow Acres project is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the Town of Stow to shape what will essentially be a blank canvas in a model climate-resilient recreation facility and restoration project. An MVP grant will help ensure that we make the most of this opportunity and that initial actions are done in a manner consistent with the overall master plan for the property. I appreciate your time and consideration on this matter and respectfully request the approval of Stow's grant application. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions - (978) 618-8530.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Hogan" with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Kate Hogan
State Representative
Third Middlesex District
Speaker Pro Tempore



Town of Stow *Select Board*

380 Great Road
Stow, MA 01775
Tel: 978-897-4515
selectboard@stow-ma.gov

April 26, 2022

Kara Runsten
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02114

RE: Town of Stow MVP Action Grant Application – Stow Acres North

Dear Ms. Runsten:

The Town of Stow Select Board has voted unanimously to offer its strong support for Stow's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Action Grant proposal for Stow Acres.

Over the past two years, Town staff have worked in partnership with the ownership of Stow Acres, the Stow Conservation Trust, and MCO & Associates, a local developer, to patiently craft a vision for the future of Stow Acres that permanently preserves more than 80% of this high priority property and meets the town's needs for housing diversity on the remainder of the land. Extensive outreach during 2020 and 2021 led to near unanimous votes at two successive Town Meetings in support of the vision for this project – the purchase of a Conservation Restriction on the South Course and the fee acquisition of 115 acres of the North Course Property, both at bargain sale prices. The Town has already voted to expend a record \$4.0 million in Community Preservation funds toward this larger vision (including \$2.5 million for the North Property), contingent on securing the balance of the funding through grants and private fundraising. We are requesting a Year 1 grant of \$960,000 toward this acquisition, with the remainder of the purchase price to be met by Stow Conservation Trust private fundraising.

Once the acquisition is complete, the Town seeks to embed the goals of the MVP program into the project through the development of a Year 2 Climate Resilience Master Plan for the property. The Plan, described in more detail in our proposal, would set the blueprint for the future use of the property – including passive and active open space areas, trails, and a variety of upland and wetland restoration areas. Extensive outreach and public involvement will seek to ensure that all voices are heard during this process – including climate vulnerable older residents and those from surrounding communities. The Plan would be driven by a focus on climate resilience – restoring ecosystem function, fostering connectivity for people and wildlife, and providing for public outdoor recreation and health for a diverse population.

We are very proud of the vision for this property and feel that the Stow Acres project will be a model development of a public-private partnership fostering, not only our affordable housing goals, but heavily focusing on climate resiliency and environmental justice by restoring key conservation areas and promoting outdoor recreational opportunities for all.

On behalf of the Stow Select Board, I thank you very much for considering our application.

Sincerely,



Ellen S. Sturgis
Chair



Town of Stow Conservation Commission

380 Great Road
Stow, Massachusetts 01775
(978) 897-8615
FAX (978) 897-4534
conservation@stow-ma.gov

April 20, 2022

Kara Runsten
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program
EOEEA, 100 Cambridge Street
Boston MA 02114

RE: Town of Stow MVP Action Grant Application – Stow Acres North

Dear Ms. Runsten:

The Town of Stow Conservation Commission voted unanimously at its meeting of April 19, 2022 to express our strong and enthusiastic support for the Town's MVP Action Grant application to fund acquisition of the 115-acre Stow Acres North Property and the preparation of a Climate Resilience Master Plan to guide future restoration and use of this property.

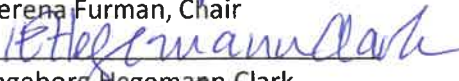
The Stow Acres project is a defining initiative for this community and a model smart growth-smart conservation collaboration. Residents have been concerned about the future of Stow Acres for decades. We have been excited to play a leadership role in the partnership to protect Stow Acres and overwhelmed by the extent of support at Town Meeting for the future vision for the property.


We currently co-hold the Conservation Restriction on the South Course and are preparing to construct the public access trail this summer. We look forward to acquisition of a portion of the North Property and to working in partnership with Stow Conservation Trust, Stow Recreation Commission and other town departments to prepare a Climate Resilience Master Plan that will guide the restoration and use of this property around the defining theme of enhancing climate resilience. We are particularly excited about the opportunity to restore wetland and stream areas on the retiring driving range, which lie adjacent to other town conservation land. We are committed to the goals of the MVP Program, to the program of public engagement in the grant application, and to supporting staff match time on this project as our top priority over the next two years.


Thank you very much for considering our application. We look forward to working with the project team and MVP staff to create a blueprint for increased connectivity and resilience on this property and in the community.

STOW CONSERVATION COMMISSION

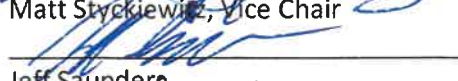

Serena Furman, Chair


Ingeborg Hegemann Clark


Liza Mattison


Doug Morse


Matt Styckiewicz, Vice Chair


Jeff Saunders


Holly Clack


Holly Clack



Town of Stow Recreation Commission

509 Great Road
Stow, Massachusetts 01775
(978) 897-2984
FAX (978) 897-4534
recreation@stow-ma.gov

April 27, 2022

Kara Runsten
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program
EOEEA, 100 Cambridge Street
Boston MA 02114

RE: Town of Stow MVP Action Grant Application – Stow Acres North

Dear Ms. Runsten:

The Town of Stow Recreation Commission would like to express our enthusiastic support for the Town's MVP Action Grant application to fund acquisition of the 115-acre Stow Acres North Property as well as the preparation of a Resilient Master Plan to guide future conservation restoration and recreational use of this property.

We are committed to the goals of the MVP Program, to the program of public engagement in the grant application, and to supporting staff match time on this project. It is our top priority over the next two years.

The Stow Acres project is a defining initiative for this community and a model "growth-smart" conservation and recreation collaboration. This is an opportunity to lead the way for other communities and to show that conservation and recreation can combine efforts to create facilities that will serve a recreational purpose while also achieving the town conservation and wetland needs. This is a strong motivating factor for the Recreation Commission. We're excited to play a leadership role in this partnership to protect Stow Acres and we are encouraged by the extent of support at Stow Town Meeting for the future vision for the property.

Thank you very much for considering our application. We look forward to working with the project team and MVP staff to create a blueprint for increased connectivity and resilience, both on this property and in the community.

STOW RECREATION COMMISSION

Michael Busch, Chair

Samantha Altieri

Dan Nicholson

William Sieller



STOW
CONSERVATION
TRUST

P.O. Box 397, Stow, MA 01775
www.stowconservationtrust.org

April 20, 2022

Kara Runsten
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program
EOEEA. 100 Cambridge Street
Boston MA 02114

RE: Town of Stow Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Grant Application – Stow Acres North

Dear Ms. Runsten:

I am writing, on behalf of the Stow Conservation Trust (“the Trust”) – Stow’s all-volunteer local land trust, founded in 1977. The purpose of this communication is to relay the Trust’s enthusiastic support for the request from our longtime conservation partner - the Town of Stow - for Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) grant funds. If granted, the funds will be used to help acquire/protect the bulk of the property that is now the North Course of Stow Acres Country Club, and then to commission an innovative Climate Resilience Master Plan for the site. The impact of such an MVP grant would be truly significant – boosting resilience for wildlife and people, and serving as a hopeful example to inspire other communities to pursue similarly bold climate response actions.

The Climate Resilience Master Plan to be funded in year 2 of the grant will provide the blueprint for enhanced resilience of the entire site including ecological restoration, enhancement of flood storage capacity, enhancement of carbon storage services, increased landscape complexity and habitat diversity, design of trails and state of the art “green” public recreation amenities. Climate resilient park facilities incorporating nature-based solutions will allow residents opportunities for healthy outdoor recreation and provide shade and water-focused recreation to mitigate impacts from extreme heat events.

The Trust has played a key role, working in close partnership with conservation and planning officials in Stow, for several years in an effort to provide an alternative to the mega development of highly energy-consuming homes that would have been built there. The Trust is proud that it conceived of the non-traditional collaborative planning exercise that has resulted in the extraordinary conservation, ecological restoration, active recreation, historic preservation, and diverse housing opportunity that is now before us. While the Town’s MVP grant relates to the North Course property only, we firmly believe the components of the larger comprehensive outcome provide essential context to fully appreciate the significance of this request for funding. FYI, the Trust is committed to raising \$100,000 for this purchase, with \$75,000 of that being applied as project match in this application.

Thank you for your highly impactful work, and for your full consideration of this request for Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant funds by the Town of Stow.

Sincerely,

Bob Wilber, President
Stow Conservation Trust



Town of Stow
PLANNING DEPARTMENT
380 Great Road
Stow, Massachusetts 01775-1122
(978) 897-5098
FAX (978) 897-2321

April 26, 2022

Kara Runsten
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program
EOEEA, 100 Cambridge Street
Boston MA 02114

RE: Town of Stow MVP Action Grant Application – Stow Acres North

Dear Ms. Runsten,

The Town of Stow Planning Board voted unanimously at its meeting of April 19, 2022 to express our strong support for the Town's MVP Action Grant application to fund acquisition of the 115-acre Stow Acres North Property and the preparation of a Resilient Master Plan to guide future restoration and use of this property.

The collaborative planning effort at the heart of the Stow Acres initiative is a model that has provided a previously unimaginable balance of the Town's core planning goals. By working together across disciplines and sectors, the Town has been able to realize a project that is based on principles of climate resiliency and smart growth.

These principles, together with the resulting plans and vision to be advanced by the MVP Action Grant Application, will allow Stow to progress toward the core goals of its Housing Production Plan, Master Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan, achieving a balanced approach and outcome that not only serves as a responsible plan for the Town's largest unprotected open space, but serves as a model of public-private partnership in an age of evolving vulnerabilities.

Thank you very much for considering our application. We look forward to working with the project team and MVP staff to create a blueprint for increased connectivity and resilience on this property and in the community.

Sincerely,

Lori Clark, Chair

Stow Acres Country Club
58 Randall Road
Stow, MA 01775

May 3, 2022

Ms. Kara Runsten
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program
EOEEA
100 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02114

Re: Stow Acres, 58 Randall Road, Stow, MA 01775

Dear Ms. Runsten,

I am the Director of Operations and am writing this letter on behalf of Stow Acres Country Club. We have been working with the Town of Stow and The Stow Conservation Trust for over a year and a half on this project. As part of the project, we have recorded a Conservation Restriction on the South Course at Stow Acres which will provide the Town with a golf course into perpetuity along with access rights for recreation.

We have agreed to terms on the North Course which provides the Town with a residential project that the Town is very supportive of as it provides housing needs that are desperately needed in the Stow area. In addition, the Town is purchasing a parcel which will be used for 9 holes of golf for the immediate future, but also provides the Town with future conservation and recreation uses that the Town will decide upon as part of a master planning process.

It has been a pleasure to work with the Town and the Conservation Trust and we are currently just finishing up the final details on a Purchase and Sale Agreement that we confident will be completed in the next several weeks.

Stow Acres is committed to completing this transaction as it is in the best interest of all parties involved and we look forward to continuing our relationship with the Town and the Conservation Trust for many years to come.

Very truly yours



Peter I. Brown



May 28, 2022

Kara Runsten
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program
EOEEA
100 Cambridge Street
Boston MA 02114

RE: Stow Acres Acquisition and Resiliency Master Plan
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Grant Application

Dear Kara:

I am writing to support the Town of Stow Grant application for the Stow Acres master plan. I have agreed to purchase approximately 70 acres of the golf course to develop a range of affordable housing alternatives for Stow and area residents. As you may know we have been working for almost two years to determine the best means to utilize the overall Stow Acres property in a manner that will meet the varied needs of many area stakeholders.

The Town has taken an extremely proactive approach in the redevelopment process. They provided the initial funding and secured the services of an excellent land planner. The planner worked with Town, myself and the course owner to highlight significant natural resources worthy of protection and to seek the most suitable redevelopment areas. As a private developer, it is a privilege to be involved with this project and has been a uniquely productive public & private partnership to get to where we are today.

The housing to be constructed will be a mix of single family homes for sale, some cottage rental homes as well as a building providing some very affordable rental apartments for area seniors 62 years or older. The site has been designed as a Traditional Neighborhood Development with our denser housing area being adjacent to what will ultimately be roughly 105 acres for long term conservation and recreation uses.

Based upon our site layout, we have placed the proposed public water supply wells to the rear of the property to limit development impacts on the pond and wetland areas. Further, subject to the approval of DEP, we are willing to allow the back 20 or so acres to be incorporated into the Town's Climate Resilience Master Plan so that this area can be considered in restoration planning, trails, etc.. This will be wholly consistent with our low impact development plans. We have also been meeting with the Stow's Green Advisory Committee to seek green alternatives that can be incorporated into the homes and overall site planning.

We are very excited to work with the Town of Stow to make this a model development showing housing and conservation efforts can be effectively and beautifully addressed to create vibrant areas for people to live and interact with nature.

If there is any project related information you would like from our end, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at 508-395-1211.

Sincerely,

Mark C. O'Hagan

Mark C. O'Hagan, President,
MCO & Associates, Inc.



FOR THE ASSABET SUDBURY & CONCORD RIVERS

23 Bradford Street · Concord, MA 01742

978 · 369 · 3956

office@oars3rivers.org

www.oars3rivers.org

April 18, 2022

Kara Runsten, MVP Manager
EOEEA
100 Cambridge St.
Boston MA 02114

Re: Letter of Support, Stow Acres North Acquisition and Resilience Master Plan

Dear Ms. Runsten,

OARS, the watershed organization for the Assabet, Sudbury and Concord Rivers, is pleased to support the proposal to the MVP Program by the Town of Stow to acquire Stow Acres golf course and develop a Resilience Master Plan. For the past year, OARS has been working with the Town of Stow as municipal lead in developing a SuAsCo Climate Resiliency Coalition to support municipal actions to build resiliency in water resources and reflect the needs of frontline populations throughout the watershed. This project will be important piece of this larger effort throughout the watershed to restore ecosystem functions to increase recharge of groundwater resources, restore a diverse wildlife habitat, and restore ecological functions, which will further the purposes of the Coalition.

This project proposes a thoughtful approach and actions that will protect the water resources of a significant piece of land abutting the Assabet River. It will also avoid piecemeal development of this open space and invest in restoring the natural functions of the landscape. These actions build climate resiliency and protect and enhance the important recreational resources of the Assabet River and Elizabeth Brook. The Town's approach to public outreach and green public facilities will provide accessible, interesting and attractive public outdoor green space for the region. We have worked with Stow municipal staff on many projects over the years and have full confidence in their commitment and ability to meet the goals of the proposed project.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alison", with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

Alison Field-Juma
Executive Director



Troop 1 Stow Scouts BSA
Established 1912
978-212-9175
Troop1Stow@gmail.com

April 27, 2022

Kara Runsten
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program
EOEEA 100 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02114

The Boy Scouts of Troop 1 Stow would like to use this letter to express their support for Stow's MVP Action Grant application to fund the acquisition of the North Property of Stow Acres golf course and preparation of a plan for the restoration and use of the property. We are confident that you will receive letters detailing how this plan jointly benefits business, housing, and conservation; we would like to focus on the benefits to scouting and thus the entire community.

Stow's conservation commission does an excellent job of creating corridors between conservation lands. Adding additional lands creates opportunities for more exploration close to home, and it creates longer hikes which prepare Scouts for their hiking merit badge and high adventure trips which involve week-long excursions with more than 50 miles of hiking.

One of the badges Scouts earn is Citizenship in the Community. We partake of what our community offers by holding our meeting in the community center, camping in our town forest, hiking in town conservation land, and holding celebrations in our town park. We are prolific in giving back to our town holding recycling and paper shredding events, volunteering at our food bank, participating in our town cleanup, participating in our Memorial Day parade and ceremony, assisting in Lions Club events, delivering winter sand to seniors, picking up and recycling Christmas trees, running summer camp activities, and most important to this topic our Eagle Scout projects.

Troop 1 Stow has a history of success in Scouts earning the rank of Eagle Scout (twice the national average). From our 90 Eagle Scouts, over 50 projects needed to earn that rank have been dedicated towards our conservation and recreation land.

Our Scouts are ready to help in the planning and caretaking of this new land. In the past, our Eagle Scouts have led projects to build bridges, benches, boardwalks, maps, trail markings, observation blinds, exercise stations, and more. New land creates the opportunities for more of these projects which help our Scouts attain ranks and immerse themselves in community giving. Our younger Scouts see these examples and are motivated to continue with Troop 1 and become Eagle Scouts. Stow residents see our efforts and learn that all can be involved in community betterment whether or not they are Scouts.

Sincerely,

John Paul Benoit – Scoutmaster

Eric Peterson – Committee Chair

"A Scout smiles and whistles under all circumstances." - Robert Baden-Powell



Town of Stow
Green Advisory Committee
380 Great Road
Stow, Massachusetts 01775

April 22, 2022

Kara Runsten
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program
EOEEA, 100 Cambridge Street
Boston MA 02114

RE: Town of Stow MVP Action Grant Application – Stow Acres North

Dear Ms. Runsten:

The Stow Green Advisory Committee wishes to express our strong support for the Town's MVP Action Grant application to fund acquisition of the 115-acre Stow Acres North Property.

The Stow Select Board established the Green Advisory Committee to serve as a resource for town departments and residents to help mitigate climate change and to support our work to adapt to the inevitable impacts of climate change. We view the Stow Acres project as one of the keys to the Town's climate resiliency plan as identified in our MVP Climate Resilience report.

Restoration of wetlands and stream corridors at the site of the Stow Acres golf course will significantly improve the Town's ability to avoid the impacts of anticipated major storm events as well as provide recreation facilities for residents. This project is part of an overall Master Plan for Stow Acres that can serve as a model for the beneficial collaboration between the town, property owner, and developers. The Master Plan also includes a parcel to be used for the development of a village style housing project consisting of energy efficient homes for all ages and income levels.

When compared to what could have occurred at the largest undeveloped parcel in Stow, the Stow Acres Master Plan and the restoration plan for the Stow Acres North parcel in particular, represent a major "win" for the future of the Town of Stow.

STOW GREEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE


Arnold Epstein, Chair



Town of Stow
COUNCIL ON AGING

509 Great Road
Stow, Massachusetts 01775
(978) 897-1880
FAX (978) 897-0486

April 29, 2022

Kara Runsten, Program Manager
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

RE: Town of Stow MVP Action Grant Application – Stow Acres North

Dear Ms. Runsten:

I am writing this letter to express that the Town of Stow, Council on Aging's (COA) strongly supports the proposed acquisition of Stow Acres and development of a Climate Resilience Master Plan. The COA is excited to be a part of this opportunity in planning for the design of a resilient conservation and recreation area in Stow. This proposal sets forth real steps to enhance the quality of life for the growing senior population that the COA serves. The COA is eager to work with other town departments such as Conservation and Recreation in a collaborative effort to help engage climate-vulnerable seniors to achieve the goals set forth as expressed in this grant proposal. The COA is committed to the goals of the MVP Program, helping to promote and educate Stow seniors on this grant proposal.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration of this proposal and its benefits to the Town of Stow.

Sincerely,

Alyson Toole
Executive Director



CONSERVATION COMMISSION

78 Main Street, Hudson, MA 01749
(978) 562-2948

Kara Runsten, MVP Program Manager
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

April 21, 2022

Re: Stow Acres North Acquisition and Resiliency Master Plan

Dear Ms. Runsten,

The Town of Hudson Conservation Commission would like to express its enthusiastic support for the Town of Stow's MVP grant application for the Stow Acres North Acquisition and Resiliency Master Plan. Both Hudson's Open Space and Recreation Plan and MVP Findings Report stress the importance of protecting land along the Assabet River and prioritize regional coordination with adjacent communities upstream and downstream of Hudson. In fact, workshop participants for our MVP Planning Grant identified the Assabet River as one of the most important community features to focus on when planning for climate resiliency. Stow's project is an important step in protecting land abutting the Assabet River and its tributaries.

In addition to supporting the protection of the Assabet River and its watershed, as a Conservation Commission we are strongly supportive of protecting remaining Open Space in our region, of ecological restoration activities, and of the education and involvement of the community in issues of climate resiliency and mitigation. All of these are key facets of Stow's proposal.

Thank you for considering funding this exciting project.

Sincerely,

James Martin, Chair
Hudson Conservation Commission



Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program Yearly Progress Report

Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Date: 4.25.2022

Municipality: Stow

Local MVP Contact Name: Jesse Steadman

1. Please list your municipalities' top priority actions, in order of priority, identified through the MVP planning process.

- a) Conduct a Water Supply Vulnerability Assessment and Educate Public on Water Supply Vulnerabilities
- b) Update Hazard Mitigation Plan
- c) Develop a Hazard Transportation and Communication Plan
- d) Develop Programs to Increase Resiliency of the Farming Community

2. Has your Core Team reconvened since your Listening Session? If so, describe the process and any revisions or updates your team made to the original MVP Report. Please list your MVP Core Team members and note any new members.

Members of the MVP Core Team convened in 2022 to discuss ongoing implementation of the Assessing the Health of Lake Boon Action Grant Application, development of the forthcoming Stow Acres North Course Acquisition and Climate Resilience Master Plan Action Grant Application, and data gathering ahead of the update of the Town's 2018 Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan. Members include:

- Denise Dembkoski – Town Administrator
- Jesse Steadman – Town Planner
- Kathleen Sferra – Conservation Director

We have prepared a detailed summary of work completed to date, and plan to reconvene the larger planning team to discuss updating our plan in late spring.

3. Discuss any other work related to the MVP process or climate change resiliency in the municipality. In what ways has your municipality used the outcomes of your workshop in other planning efforts (e.g., updating existing local plans)?

Grants and Initiatives

- Stow was awarded \$157,000 for the Healthy Lake Boon MVP Action Grant, focused on engaging citizens in understanding the water quality issues that affect Lake Boon and

how climate change may affect the Lake. Final Recommendations are expected by 6/30/22.

- The Stow Fire Department obtained \$300,000 in state funding for a project to install fire protection cisterns in key underserved neighborhoods of Stow, addressing a high priority action item in the plan to ensure water in times of drought.
- Stow received a 2021 Advancing Climate Resiliency grant from MAPC to work with OARS, Inc. on the creation of the *SuAsCo Climate Resiliency Coalition*. The Project received private funding for an additional 2 years, through 2023.
- Stow was awarded \$750,000 for development of design plans for the Track Road Multi-Use Path, providing potential options for improved emergency response.

Preservation / Conservation / Development

- The Town, together with the Stow Conservation Trust, collaborated with Stow Acres Country Club and a private developer to develop a comprehensive conservation and development plan for 325 acres at Stow Acres Golf Course resulting in the permanent protection of the South Course with a conservation restriction, and a plan to protect the majority of the North Course by purchase. A 189-unit mixed income development is proposed on the remainder of the North Course. The project has received strong community support. The town will be applying for an Action Grant to complete the acquisition and prepare a Climate Resilience Master Plan for the property.
- Stow protected several key parcels since 2016 including land at Regency at Stow, Stow Acres South Course, Carver Hill Orchard, Small Farm, portions of Honey Pot Hill Orchard, Town Center Park and portions of Minister's Pond, 144 Red Acre Road, portions of Hallock Point, and Spring Hill. Much of this land has been protected through Planned Conservation Development, and some through outright acquisition. In each case, these natural lands help minimize runoff, recharge groundwater and create opportunities for linkage and more resilient landscapes.
- 144 Red Acre Road was acquired for the dual use of conservation and affordable housing, with the potential to be used as a future public water supply.
- Development of commercial / residential solar facilities totaling 9,500 MW/hrs. of electricity or 18% of Stow's total annual electricity usage has taken place since the initial MVP Plan completion.
- In 2020, the Planning and Highway Departments completed construction on an expanded infiltration system under the Town's Lower Common to provide additional storage and recharge of the stormwater in the Town's business district.

Municipal / Regulatory

- Stow formed a Green Advisory Committee, with representation from key boards and departments. The Committee is in the process of developing a *Stow Climate Action Plan*.
- Residents and Town have undertaken widespread well testing throughout Stow as the emergence of PFAS issue increases understanding of the vulnerability of private water supply wells.

- A sinkhole in the Lake Boon Dam initiated plan for reconstruction of the dam. Design is currently underway, with construction funding expected on the 2022 Annual Town Meeting warrant.
 - In March of 2022, the Stow Green Advisory Committee worked with Hudson Light and Power to create an “All Electric Home Incentive Rebate Program for Developers,” providing a \$2750 rebate for all electric home construction.
 - Stow allocated \$100,000 of American Rescue Plan Act funding for feasibility study for creating privately managed Public Water Supply for the Lower Village Business District.
 - The Town updated its General Bylaw to address Illicit Discharges to the Town’s MS4, and reduce potential vulnerabilities outlined in the MVP plan.
 - In 2018 the Planning Board has since updated the Zoning Bylaw to clarify the intent and threshold for requiring an Erosion Control Special Permit.
 - The Planning Department is currently working on zoning amendments for the Town’s primary business district that will include requirements for low impact development techniques to manage stormwater.
 - The Active Adult Neighborhood Bylaw updated in 2021 with expectation for nearly 100 acres off Athens Lane to be redeveloped as 140-unit mixed income housing and >50% preserved open space.
- 4. Please list any grants that your municipality has applied for, or received, to implement actions from your MVP report. Please note grant awards or applications that advanced priority actions.**

In 2020, the Towns of Stow and Hudson received an MVP Action Grant for a project called “Assessing the Health of Lake Boon – A Key to Climate Resiliency in Stow & Hudson --and beyond.” Funding was provided for a citizen science-based initiative to better understand water quality and quantity issues affecting Lake Boon, and the Lake’s vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. The second year of grant funding is currently drawing to a close and recommendations are in process.

The Stow Fire Department obtained \$300,000 in state funding for a project to install fire protection cisterns in key underserved neighborhoods of Stow, addressing a high priority action item in the plan.

- 5. Please list any other steps that your municipality has taken towards implementing your priority actions.**

The Town of Stow was awarded \$15,000 from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council’s Accelerating Climate Resiliency grant program to work with the OARS: For the Assabet, Sudbury and Concord Rivers on the creation of watershed based Climate Resiliency Coalition among the 13 town MAPC Sub-region, of which Stow is a part. The Coalition will identify shared priorities among the town’s MVP plans and other climate initiatives to identify efficiency gains and share knowledge and resources as it pertains to

advancing climate resiliency and watershed health. The Project received private funding for an additional 2 years, through 2023.

6. Please list any potential next steps to advance priority actions during the next year.

The Town of Stow is working collaboratively across Departments to advance the 2 Year Stow Acres North Course Acquisition and Climate Resilience Master Plan Action Grant. Year 1 will focus on acquisition of 111 acres of the North Course, to conclude a successful multi-stakeholder plan for conservation and development at the north and south courses of Stow Acres Country Club. Year 2 will focus on the development of a Climate Resilience Master Plan for the Town owned property, which will guide the overall use and management of the land in a manner consistent with the Town's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan and core MVP program priorities.

The Planning and Conservation Departments will be reconvening the stakeholders associated with the 2018 MVP Planning process in Stow for the purpose of reflecting on what has changed in Stow and the region and to update vulnerabilities and priority recommended action steps accordingly. The stakeholder group is expected to convene late spring, 2022. This will be an opportunity to involve a number of new department heads in this effort.

7. Please note any difficulties or challenges the community has identified through the MVP planning process or while seeking to implement priority actions and any steps the community has identified to address these challenges.

No real difficulties identified to date, other than the challenge of maintaining momentum and engaging stakeholders during COVID, when it has been difficult to meet in person and both lead departments have been short-handed. On the positive side, we have a new Town Administrator who is actively interested and engaged in this effort.

8. Please identify any data needs or information gaps that the state could help fill.

The Town of Stow is interested in obtaining improved data on water resource modelling under various climate change scenarios. Advanced hydrological modelling could allow the Town to better understand the deficiencies in it's FEMA mapping, identify front line populations whose vulnerabilities may not be fully understood, identify at risk critical infrastructure, and provide the Town with tools for managing drought events. This information will be particularly helpful during the process of designing wetland and floodplain restoration at Stow Acres.



Town of Stow
OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK

Town Building - 380 Great Road
Stow, Massachusetts 01775-2127
Tel. (978) 897-5034
FAX (978) 897-4534

November 18, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

The following is a true copy of action taken at the special town meeting held at Hale School, Stow, on October 30, 2021.

ARTICLE 5. Stow Acres North Course Acquisition

On motion by Select Board Chair Ellen Sturgis, it was voted 243 in favor and 17 opposed to raise and appropriate, transfer, borrow or otherwise the sum of four million dollars (\$4,000,000) to acquire, for open space and recreation purposes, approximately 115 +/- acres of land on Randall Road in Stow, shown as the entirety of Assessors' Map R11, Lot 11A and a portion of Assessors Map R11, Lot 25B-3, and described in a deed recorded with the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds in Book 67309, Page 266, and for costs incidental or related thereto, including legal, title, appraisal, engineering, and other costs or fees;

And, to fund said acquisition, to appropriate and transfer two million two hundred thousand dollars (\$2,200,000) from the Community Preservation Unreserved Fund Balance and three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) from the Community Preservation Open Space Fund Balance, with the remainder of the acquisition costs being funded by gifts and/or grants;

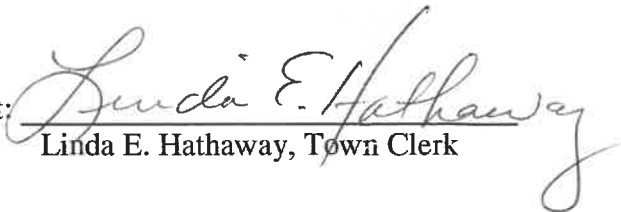
And, further, that to meet this appropriation, to authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, to borrow all or a portion of the funds as authorized under MGL c. 44 and/or any other enabling authority, and to issue notes or bonds of the Town therefor; that the said board is further authorized to take any other action necessary or convenient to carry out this vote; and further that any premium received by the Town upon the sale of any bonds or notes approved by this vote, less any premium applied to the payment of the costs of issuance of such bonds or notes, may be applied to the payment of costs approved by this vote in accordance with MGL c. 44 sec. 20, thereby reducing by a like amount the amount authorized to be borrowed to pay such costs, or to take any other action relative thereto.

And, further, to authorize the Select Board to acquire said parcels of land by purchase, gift, and/or eminent domain, with the care, custody and control of approximately 24 acres to be vested in the Conservation Commission for passive recreation and open space purposes under the provisions of MGL Chapter 40, Section 8C, and with the remaining 90 acres, more or less, of said land to be in the care, custody and control of the Recreation Commission for active recreation and parks under the provisions of MGL Chapter 45, Section 3, which parcels are approximately shown on the map in the warrant and shall be shown on a surveyed plan recorded at the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds;

And to authorize the Select Board to convey conservation restrictions and/or easements as required by MGL Chapter 44B, Section 12(a), meeting the requirements of MGL Chapter 184, Sections 31-33, and/or enter into lease agreements (which may exceed three years) of portions of the recreation land for golf and related purposes;

And, further, to authorize the Select Board or its designee to apply for, accept and expend any funds that may be provided by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and/or other public or private sources to defray all or a portion of the costs of said acquisition, including, but not limited to, grants and/or reimbursements under the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (P.L. 88-578), Chapter 132A Section 11, and/or any other state or federal program in any way connected with the scope of this Article, or receive gifts as may be available for reimbursement to the Town for these purposes.

A true copy. Attest:


Linda E. Hathaway, Town Clerk