

## MRV CIP Concerns & Responses

6/1/20

- Is MRVPD Steering Committee and staff willing and able to do the heavy lift of securing community buy-in from the three towns?
  - As currently proposed, the heavy lift of the SC is (3 nominated members) leading a committee and committing MRVPD resources.
  - Question: Is it felt that buy-in (approval) from the three town selectboards and planning commissions is needed to take on as a MRVPD project?
  - Question: Is it felt that buy-in is needed for post-project action?
    - If so, that is an additional conversation. This project is proposing value outside of action (and beneficiaries outside of select boards), though action is ultimately the vision. However, the likelihood that buy-in from town officials would lead to action is low; this project proposes focusing on building a strong and inclusive foundation for collecting and communicating data.
- Comparison with previous visioning exercises:
  - Nothing was done with the data
    - My understanding is that the events themselves were positive and successful, and some initiatives were in fact spurred by the data.
    - Still a relevant concern, as nothing is done with the data from the annual data report and data collected from previous visioning exercises; in response to this concern, this project is an attempt to manage what we can control (increase relevancy, improve communication, etc.).
  - Lacked leadership and government buy-in
    - We are proposing MRVPD leadership of the indicators project, which is already the case.
    - Question: Should government buy-in be required to make existing work more relevant and effective?
      - We believe that government buy-in would be very useful for 1+ aspects of the project, but that lack of buy-in should not stop us from improving our existing work. Need to specify if need buy-in for full project, or a specific part (e.g. the visioning effort).
- What will be different from previous visioning attempts for the CIP to be successful?
  - Visioning (done correctly) is a positive community-building process. The proposed vision process will include specific and measurable goals. While visioning is an effort in and of itself, it is included in this project as a means to develop more relevant and effective data.
    - Community members are invited to help create the vision and goals.
    - Process is led by a diverse group of stakeholders (the “Leadership Committee”).
    - Immediate follow up is proposed in the form of a synthesis presented via webinar and the definition of indicator domains/dimensions.

- A product of the vision process is a new and improved community indicator system, which includes on-going evaluation through communication with stakeholders to ensure the vision and goals are being adequately tracked and measured.
    - Indicators enable us to be accountable to the vision and goals.
- CIP would be a waste of time if action is not pursued.
  - See stated Goals & Outcomes in proposal document; are these not worth the effort if action is not pursued?
  - Can we define what we mean by 'action'?
    - In Long Term Outcomes we include "Increased use of data in local decision-making"; to be more specific, we could say something like: "Mad River Valley officials, businesses, non-profits and community members are comfortable with and eager to use the [CIP data tool] to inform priorities, formulate and evaluate policies and programs, and other community-impacted decisions."
    - The project could be reorganized into the collective impact model that has a greater focus on building a coalition and a structure to hold coalition partners accountable to meeting specific (quantifiable) goals.
    - Other ideas for ensuring 'action'?
- "CIP" is overly analytical; simple language is needed to communicate to the community.
  - Agreed. The proposal was written to be factual and detailed, and is not what would be presented to the community. A more compelling name/branding will be developed; how to pitch/communicate to different stakeholders is a worthwhile conversation.
- Too many unknowns and inability to engage public during COVID.
  - A relevant and important concern, but something that should be explored before saying it can't be done. Despite real challenges, it is an important time to engage for community solidarity and resilience. It is unknown how long difficulties with traditional engagement strategies will continue – we can't wait for COVID to end to push positive efforts forward. As Bob noted, now is the time to be innovative (and other communities are successfully engaging...).
- Feels like an academic exercise in engaging the public.
  - Not sure if I captured the full sentiment here, but 1) the way in which we engage the public will be determined by the Leadership Committee; 2) community visioning may be 'an exercise' but has many benefits, one of which is informing the work of MRVPD; 3) we engage the public so that we are not operating a fully top-down organization.
- People have data fatigue and feel that there is nothing we don't already know.
  - A fair point about our current reality that this project is aiming to address by providing goals, including additional quantitative and qualitative data, measuring progress, and developing data communication tools.