



# Senator Edward J. Markey FY2023 Congressionally Directed Spending

## Request (Montague: Avenue A Streetscape Improvement Project)

### Name & Contact Info

Steven Ellis  
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stevene@montague-ma.gov

### Mailing Address

6 Stevens Street  
Turners Falls MA 01376

### Permanent Address

6 Stevens Street  
Turners Falls MA 01376

\* indicates a required field.

## Section 1. Requesting Entity

### 1. Name of Entity \*

Please note that for-profit entities are not permitted to receive congressionally directed spending items

Town of Montague, MA

### 2. Organizational Designation \*

Is the requesting organization a non-profit, for-profit, state government, or local government entity?

Local Government

### 3. Non-Profit EIN

If a non-profit, provide the organization's Employer Identification Number.

04-6001231

### 4. Address Line 1 \*

Montague Town Hall

### 5. Address Line 2

One Avenue A

### 6. City \*

Turners Falls

### 7. State \*

MA

### 8. Zip Code \*

01376

### 9. Priority Ranking of Proposal (if multiple proposals are being submitted) \*

If only one proposal is being submitted, please enter 1.

1

### 10. Has/will this request be submitted to other Members of Congress? \*

Yes

## 10.1 Member Contact Information

For each Member, provide the following:

- Member Name
- State
- Staff Point of Contact
  - Email
  - Phone

Congressman Jim McGovern: Ryan Early, Legislative Assistant. Email: Ryan.Early@mail.house.gov Phone: (202) 225-6101

Senator Elizabeth Warren: Chris Gongora, WMass Regional Director. Email: Chris\_Gongora@warren.senate.gov Phone: (413) 788-2690

Senator Ed Markey: Karlee Popken, Appropriations Specialist. Email: karlee\_popken@markey.senate.gov Phone: (202) 224-4410

## Section 2. Bill and Account Specific Information

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### 1. Is this proposal for funds available in the Agriculture, Food and Drug Administration and Rural Development bill? \*

Please review the list of all eligible subcommittee accounts and their requirements [here](#). Ensure that your request fully meets the requirements of the account, and note that some accounts include a matching requirement where applicable.

No

#### 1.1 Please identify which account

*No answer.*

### 2. Is this proposal for funds available in the Commerce, Justice, Science bill? \*

Please review the list of all eligible subcommittee accounts and their requirements [here](#). Ensure that your request fully meets the requirements of the account.

No

#### 2.1 Please identify which account

*No answer.*

### 3. Is this proposal for funds available in the Energy & Water Development bill? \*

Please review the list of all eligible subcommittee accounts and their requirements [here](#). Ensure that your request fully meets the requirements of the account, and note that some accounts include a cost sharing requirement where applicable.

No

#### 3.1 Please identify which account

*No answer.*

### 4. Is this proposal for funds available in the Financial Services and General Government bill? \*

Please review the list of all eligible subcommittee accounts and their requirements [here](#). Ensure that your request fully meets the requirements of the account.

No

#### 4.1 Please identify which account

*No answer.*

**5. Is this proposal for funds available in the Homeland Security bill? \***

Please review the list of all eligible subcommittee accounts and their requirements [here](#). Ensure that your request fully meets the requirements of the account.

No

**5.1 Please identify which account**

*No answer.*

**5.2 Acknowledgement - state agency letter of support**

Proposals considered under the Homeland Security subcommittee **must** be accompanied by a letter of support from the appropriate state agency affirming that it believes the project is eligible. Please:

- 1) Enter the name of the issuing state agency in the answer space below
- 2) Attach this letter at the end of your application

*No answer.*

**6. Is this proposal for funds available in the Interior, Environment bill? \***

Please carefully review the list of all eligible subcommittee accounts and their requirements [here](#). Ensure that your request fully meets the requirements of the account, and note that some accounts include a matching requirement where applicable.

For many of these accounts, the Interior subcommittee is requiring detailed questions to be answered in a specific numbered format. You **must** answer all of the required questions exactly as they are written for consideration on question 13 of the next page of the questionnaire.

No

**6.1 Please identify which account**

*No answer.*

**7. Is this proposal for funds available in the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education bill? \***

Please review the list of all eligible subcommittee accounts and their requirements [here](#). Ensure that your request fully meets the requirements of the account, and note that except where specifically authorized and noted, CDS cannot be used for construction.

No

**7.1 Please identify which account**

*No answer.*

**8. Is this proposal for funds available in the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs bill? \***

Please review the list of all eligible subcommittee accounts and their requirements [here](#). Ensure that your request fully meets the requirements of the account.

No

**8.1 Please identify which account**

*No answer.*

**9. Is this proposal for funds available in the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development bill? \***

Please review the list of all eligible subcommittee accounts and their requirements [here](#). Ensure that your request fully meets the requirements of the account, and note that many of the transportation-related accounts include a requirement that the project is listed on either the STIP or TIP list or be otherwise validated by the state.

Yes

**9.1 Please identify which account**

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Economic Development Initiatives (EDI) for economic development projects

**9.2 Is the request being submitted to the Highway Infrastructure Programs (HIP), Transit Infrastructure Grants (TIG), or Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement Program (CRISI) accounts?**

No

**9.3 NOTE: If you answered yes to question 9.2, you MUST provide a link here to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP), Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), or State Rail Plan.**

OR you may provide a letter from MassDOT confirming that:

- (1) the project is eligible for Federal-aid highway funding under title 23, United States Code;
- (2) the State DOT is willing to carry out the project if funding is enacted; and
- (3) the State DOT will include the project on the STIP or TIP once funding for the project is enacted.

Enter the website and cite the relevant page number below, or attach your letter from MassDOT to the end of the application.

*No answer.*

**10. Does this project meet the necessary criteria for certain accounts as outlined in the list of eligible CDS accounts? \***

account criteria here:

Yes

## Section 3. Request Information

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**1. Name of Proposal \***

Montague-Turners Falls Avenue A Streetscape Improvement Project

**2. Congressionally Directed Spending Request (\$) \***

no commas, decimals or numbers with leading zeros

975000

**3. Brief Description of Proposal \***

Enter a brief summary (100 words or less) of the item/project

The Avenue A Streetscape Improvement Project will restore an ADA compliant, pedestrian-oriented streetscape in the Turners Falls village center. Located within an Environmental Justice Area, Avenue A is Montague's retail, dining, and entertainment center, and a state-designated Cultural District. This bid ready project would complete the north end of the Avenue A Streetscape, replacing aged and heaving brick sidewalks with a new brick and cement concourse designed to enhance longevity and accessibility. New traffic signals and pedestrian-scale lighting will enhance safety, accessibility, visual appeal and walkability, consistent with the Town's Livability, COVID "Rapid Recovery" and ADA Transition plans.

#### 4. Description of Importance to Massachusetts \*

The strength of the Commonwealth lies in the vitality of its municipalities. The Town of Montague, located in Franklin County, typifies both the opportunity and challenge faced by former industrial communities in the state's northwestern corridor. Montague's Turners Falls village center is renowned for its evolution from a declining industrial center to a vibrant community. At its heart is Avenue A, which is the setting for an arts, dining, and entertainment economy that has been carefully cultivated. A truly unique and important place, the Turners Falls downtown has the distinction of being both an Environmental Justice Area and a State designated Cultural District.

The health and vibrance of our downtown economy is both treasured and fragile. Incomes and property values in Franklin County substantially lag those of the state overall and that is most evident in Turners Falls. This economic disadvantage, coupled with substantial population loss in the broader region, leave this economic and cultural center particularly vulnerable to economic crises. The pandemic severely damaged our downtown economy and the economic lives of our downtown residents; who are resilient, but also disproportionately disadvantaged economically.

We believe Montague is poised for recovery and that the Commonwealth desperately needs aspiring communities like Montague to thrive, particularly in western Massachusetts. The Commonwealth is stronger if all of its regions are actively moving toward prosperity and Turners Falls – an urban village that plays the role as a de facto Gateway City in our region – is central to the region's prosperity.

This modest investment in the Avenue A Streetscape Improvement Project would help transform our downtown's physical landscape, enhancing the appeal of existing businesses and entertainment venues and attracting new investment to restore those that have closed. It would create economic opportunity and restore jobs lost in a village center surrounded by affordable housing with only limited access to public transportation (no night or weekend service). It would also improve accessibility throughout the north end of the downtown corridor, improving access to Town Hall and the MA DCR's Discovery Center. Further, it would uplift the immediate neighborhood, which is home to many of our most vulnerable residents.

This project is good for Montague and good for Massachusetts. It aligns with Commonwealth's goals of "rapid recovery" in the wake of COVID; of creating opportunity in low-income communities; and of improving the accessibility of public and private services. It would accomplish in what year what would otherwise require several years – perhaps a decade – of CDBG funded projects. The Commonwealth needs communities such as Montague to prosper and rebuild their working age populations and this is a simple and cost-efficient approach to progressing toward that goal.

#### 5. Description of Benefit to Local Community \*

The Avenue A Streetscape Improvement Project is a community priority that would enhance the safety and accessibility in our arts, dining and retail district, which is also home to essential municipal services and educational resources, such as the state DCR's Discovery Center. This is particularly important now in the wake of the COVID pandemic, which cause the closure of several businesses, including landmark dining establishments.

A designated Environmental Justice Area, Turners Falls benefits from over 200 units of affordable housing in the immediate vicinity of this project - a significant concentration for Franklin County. Residents without cars or with limited mobility require ADA compliant sidewalks and adequate lighting to accomplish everyday tasks, and need access to the employment provided by downtown establishments. Taking a slightly boarder view of our community, the Turners Falls village center serves as a critical gathering point for the larger Franklin County region.

These improvements have been a major point of emphasis in Montague for several years, resulting in a series of small projects funded by a succession of grants, largely from CDBG as well as the MA Office on Disability. This is reflected in our strategic planning. Improvements to lighting, safety and walkability were strongly featured in the 2013 Turners Falls Livability Plan and re-affirmed as a community priority in the 2020 Livability Plan update. They are also priorities in our ADA Transition Plan and COVID Rapid Recovery Plan. The Town has vetted this ongoing improvement project through numerous community hearings over several years.

**6. Budget Breakdown \***

Please provide a brief budget breakdown of the project, including the sources and amounts of non-federal matching funds.

A full line item budget is available on the website that supports this request, located at...

<https://www.montague-ma.gov/p/1500/Avenue-A-Streetscape-Improvement-Project-FY23-CDS-Earmark-Request>

The components of the work described in this proposal complement and complete improvements that have already been made or are in the process of construction or bid preparation. The total cost of the rehabilitation of sidewalks and traffic signals, and addition of pedestrian-scale lighting on the North End of Avenue A is projected to be \$1,534,594. The costs not included in this application include \$559,594 in previously awarded FY20 and FY21 MA DHCD CDBG grants. The FY20 grant is currently under construction, with the FY21 grant expected to be bid this spring. The Town will use staff resources to manage procurement and construction management, expected to be in the vicinity of \$25,000.

**Construction Budget**

GENERAL MOBILIZATION \$28,000

DEMOLITION \$43,055

EARTHWORK/SITE PREPARATION \$3,900

SITE DRAINAGE and UTILITIES \$91,400

PAVING and SITE IMPROVEMENTS \$520,273.75

Sub-Total \$686,628.75

15% Contractor O+P \$102,994.31

15% Contingency \$102,994.31

12% inflation \$82,395.45

TOTAL CONSTRUCTION \$975,012.83

The above budget is subject to inflation escalator due to the design cost having been last updated in December 2020, however, current FY21 CDBG funded project bids came in within those estimates in February 2022.

Note that Montague has previously used \$1.2M in MA DHCD CDBG grants, \$90,000 in MA Office on Disability grants, and \$66,737 in MA Complete Streets grants to make improvements to the larger and immediately adjacent Avenue A corridor.

**7. List Any Entities or Organizations Partnering in or Supporting the Project \***

The Town of Montague is working closely with the Franklin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (FCHRA), which is overseeing construction management for the current CDBG-funded improvements that will complement this proposed project to restore the North End of the Avenue A Streetscape. FCHRA also owns and maintains many affordable housing units on and in the immediate vicinity of Avenue A.

The project is a critical priority of the Montague Selectboard and has the support of local businesses, the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce, The Franklin County Community Development Corporation, the Shea Theater, the Franklin Regional Council of Governments and Massachusetts legislators Representative Natalie Blais and Senator Jo Comerford. Further, agencies of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts funded Montague's COVID Rapid Recovery Plan and ADA Transition Plan, which call for these improvements.

**8. Three Concise Points to Justify Use of Congressionally Directed Spending \***

1. This project is consistent with federal goals for economic recovery, social and economic equity, and accessibility. It directly impacts business sectors hardest hit by COVID, in an Environmental Justice Area, and facilitates access to essential government and other services.
2. This bid-ready project would dramatically accelerate streetscape improvements and progress toward those goals, avoiding the cost and time inefficiency of pursuing improvements piecemeal over many years.
3. It would allow the Town to deploy future CDBG and other grant resources to other critical infrastructure, housing rehabilitation/development, and human services-related initiatives.

## 9. Additional Details

Optional. Enter any additional details here.

Montague is a small community in a region largely forgotten by those with capital. It is substantially more challenging to attract resources and investment here than in most of Massachusetts, so government must make strategic investments to facilitate community and economic development. The village of Turners Falls is our largest and most complex population center. The halting pace of its redevelopment presents great risk to our future, but is the best we can afford. This earmark request would help catalyze our recovery, restoring and solidifying the slow and steady gains we'd made over the past two decades.

Additional information pertaining to this request, including the narrative, budget, and photo exhibits, can be found at: <https://www.montague-ma.gov/p/1500/Avenue-A-Streetscape-Improvement-Project-FY23-CDS-Earmark-Request>

## 10. Organization Capacity \*

Please describe the requesting organization's capacity to carry out the project, including references to prior similar projects.

Montague's success in redevelopment to date has been born of thoughtful investments in staff capacity. As a community of 8,500, we are fortunate to have a full time Town Administrator, a Community and Economic Development Planner, and Assistant Planner, as well as an experienced DPW superintendent and foreman. This team has implemented numerous projects of this or greater scale within the past five years, including construction of a new DPW facility, major wastewater collection system enhancements, numerous road and sidewalk construction projects, including nearly identical improvements on Avenue A, and an ongoing bridge replacement project that is beginning construction now. Once approved, we are well positioned to bid this project in spring 2023 for construction in the summer 2023 season.

## 11. Jobs Created \*

Will this initiative create jobs in Massachusetts?

Yes

### 11.1 Additional Information

Indicate how many jobs the project will create in Massachusetts and provide support for estimates.

We anticipate this project will result in the restoration of business activity along the full Avenue A corridor. This includes three restaurants that have permanently or temporarily closed and several now-vacant storefronts. It is also expected to help leverage construction of a 16,000 ft<sup>2</sup> medical services complex, with a land development agreement under development for that site, which is located in the project area. Assumed employment impact of the project is in the vicinity of 110 jobs.

3 restaurants: 45 jobs

3 retail storefronts: 15 jobs

38 Avenue A Medical Complex: 50 jobs

## 12. Jobs Sustained \*

Will the requested funding sustain existing jobs in Massachusetts?

Yes

### 12.1 Additional Details

As noted, Montague's Turners Falls village center is the primary retail, dining and entertainment destination for the community and the county. It is also economically fragile, with virtually all of its businesses locally owned and operated with a shoestring budget. We cannot say specifically how many jobs will be lost if this project is not completed, but we've received word from local businesses that we must do more to create a welcoming and accessible context in which they can operate their businesses. This doesn't allow us to accurately estimate lost employment, but the presence of that possibility is very real.

## 13. Additional Information Required by Subcommittee \*

Please carefully review all requirements for your submission based on the account guidance here. If the account you are submitting under requires additional information, you must add that information here **exactly** as requested by the Subcommittee.

If the specified account does not require additional information, please confirm that in the text box below.

Not applicable

## Section 4. Funding History

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### 1. Prior Federal Funding \*

Has the requesting entity received federal funding within the last five years?

Yes

#### 1.1 Previous Funding

Please list all federal funding awards that the requesting entity has received in the last five years (beginning in Fiscal Year 2017). Please only list awards that have been made to the specific requesting entity as opposed to any parent organization.

If at any point the requesting entity has failed to adequately manage or execute a prior federal funding award, please indicate that as well.

The community is in receipt of the first half of \$2,402,826 in funding as a Non-Entitlement Unit through the ARPA CSLFRF program. The first installment of \$1,201,403 was received in July 2021 with the second equal installment expected on or about July 2022.

The Town received the following CDBG awards through the MA DHCD:

FY17: \$490,611

FY18: \$737,395

FY19: \$612,050

FY20: \$675,519

FY21: \$788,174

The Town of Montague has implemented all grant funded projects and complied with all requirements thereto, with no negative findings or concerns known.

### 2. Past Congressionally Directed Funding \*

At any point in time, has the requesting entity received previous Congressionally Directed Funding?

No

#### 2.1 Previous Congressionally Directed Funding

Please identify what funding, the project, and the Fiscal Year in which funding was received.

*No answer.*

### 3. Does the requesting entity anticipate future year requests for additional Congressionally directed support? \*

Yes

#### 3.1 Is Additional Federal Funding Required? When and How Will the Project Become Self-Sustaining?

The Town does not presently anticipate a request but does not wish to foreclose on the possibility. This particular project is self-contained and should not require additional spending once completed through funding provided through this request.

### 4. Certification \*

The head of the requesting organization stipulates that the information provided herein is accurate and any request for federal project-specific funding is made in accordance with the applicable rules, fiduciary requirements, and bylaws of the organization.

Yes

## Section 5. Contact Information

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**1. Full Name \***

Steven Ellis

**2. Position \***

Town Administrator

**3. Department \***

Selectboard Office

**4. E-mail \***

townadmin@montague-ma.gov

**5. Phone Number \***

413-863-3200

**6. Does the requesting entity retain federally registered lobbying representation? \***

Note: failure to disclose the representation by registered federal lobbyists will result in disqualification of the application.

No

**6.1 Retained Representation**

Please list all federally registered lobbying firms retained by the requesting entity:

- Firm Name
- Principal Lobbyist
- Address
- Email
- Phone

*No answer.*

**7. Agency/Service Program Sponsor \***

Does the requested project have a sponsoring office or individual within a federal agency?

No

**7.1 Full Name**

*No answer.*

**7.2 Position**

*No answer.*

**7.3 Agency**

*No answer.*

**7.4 Location**

*No answer.*

**7.5 E-mail**

*No answer.*

**7.6 Phone**

*No answer.*