REGIONAL PRIORITY PROJECT PRIORITIZATION PROCESS

PROJECT INFORMATION FORM

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PROJECT NAME:

Community Child Care Expansion Project (Otter Creek Child Center)

TYPE OF PROJECT:

- [x] Infrastructure:
  - [ ] Water
  - [ ] Wastewater
  - [ ] Broadband
  - [ ] Transportation
  - [x] Public Facility
  - [ ] Other
- [ ] General Development:
  - [ ] Industrial
  - [ ] Commercial
  - [ ] Residential
  - [ ] Mixed
- [ ] Site/Facility Development for Specific Business
- [ ] Workforce Development
- [ ] Business Development
- [ ] Other:

PROJECT SPONSOR:

Organization Name	Otter Creek Child Center, Inc.
Organization Mailing Address	71 S. Pleasant Street, Middlebury, VT 05753
Organization Email	linda@ottercreekcc.org
Organization Phone	(802) 388-9688

Contact info for the person submitting project information:

Name	Linda January
Title	Executive Director
Mailing Address	71 S. Pleasant Street, Middlebury, VT 05753
Email	linda@ottercreekcc.org
Phone	(802) 388-9688

PROJECT PRINCIPAL(S) (if different than above):

Person 1:

Name	David Provost
Title	Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration
Organization	Middlebury College
Mailing Address	Middlebury College, Old Chapel 102, Middlebury, V 05753
Email	dprovost@middlebury.edu
Phone	(802) 443-5699

Person 2:

Name	
Title	
Organization	
Mailing Address	
Email	
Phone	

PROJECT DESCRIPTION - Provide a brief (2-3 sentence) description of the project. (500 character limit):

The Childcare Community Expansion Project is an expansion of the Otter Creek Child Center and College Street Children's Centers that will add an additional 77 daily childcare spots in Addison County.

DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTION (5000 Characters):

The Community Child Care Expansion Project (C3EP) is a cooperative effort of families, Otter Creek Child Center (OCCC), College Street Children's Center (CSCC), Middlebury College, the Early Care and Learning Partnership, Champlain Valley Early Head Start, Let's Grow Kids, Building Bright Futures, area employers, educational institutions, and towns. It is a response to a decade-long concern by families and employers about the lack of high-quality affordable care. This project addresses an urgent need for infant and preschool-age child care in our community by more than doubling the existing combined capacity of OCCC and CSCC and subsequently providing an important boost to the local economy.

This project will also create a replicable model of a public-private partnership to address a chronic issue that is fundamental to the health and wellbeing of Vermont families, and crucial to economic growth and development in predominantly rural areas. Our goal is to demonstrate to other counties in Vermont that it is possible to engage large employers, landowners, NGOs, town governments, and others in efforts to create thriving child care environments that will provide a positive return on their financial support and investment of relevant expertise. Such an effort is not as simple as starting a business or building a facility; it is about designing a holistic programmatic response at a community scale for an issue that impacts the entire state.

The project is a renovation of the current Otter Creek Child Center facility to increase overall child care capacity by 77 daily slots. Plans include renovating the existing structure and constructing a substantial ADA-compliant addition, as well as expanding play areas to provide dedicated spaces for infants and toddlers and increased nature-based education opportunities. The building is designed to conserve energy, provide a variety of state-of-the-art, age-appropriate classrooms and many shared spaces (family greeting areas, kitchen and dining areas, and an atelier). Staff rooms, a community early care and learning library, a multi-purpose room/gross motor play space, and large and small conference rooms will enhance the use of the facility as a workforce development center for the community. Students from Hannaford Career Center, Community College of Vermont, Castleton University, and Middlebury College will have the opportunity for hands on-learning for both child development and nonprofit management.

Upon completion, the Community Child Care Expansion Project will increase child care capacity in rural Addison County in a modern, ADA-compliant facility, create dozens of new jobs for child care staff, and serve as a workforce development hub for the early care and learning industry and as a learning lab for high school and college students. Further, this project will galvanize the corporate, higher education, municipal, and non-profit sectors to collaborate in new and creative ways to create a model for the state of Vermont to address the child care crisis.

The leadership team, comprising diverse stakeholders such as parents, community members, educational institutions, and local organizations, is actively engaged in advancing the project. Partnerships with entities like Middlebury College, Let's Grow Kids, Champlain Valley Head Start, and Addison County Building Bright Futures reflect strong community support and commitment to project success.

PROJECT LOCATION (3000 characters):

Provide the physical location of the project and/or the area to be served by the project

The project is located at 150 Weybridge Street in Middlebury, Vermont. Two lots have been combined (one previously owned by Middlebury College) in order to provide for safe, off street drop off and parking.

The project will serve all of Addison County with an emphasis on families working in or near the town of Middlebury. The infants and toddlers at the College Street Children's Center will be moved to the newly renovated Otter Creek Child Center once the project is completed.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND BENEFITS (3000 Characters):

Describe the purpose and benefits to the region of the project. Describe if/how the project builds capacity within the region for improved economic development or community development, builds capacity in the region for improved economic and community development, and/or advances the goals and objectives of the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and/or regional plans, and addresses the most pressing needs of the region.

The Community Child Care Expansion Project holds significant importance to the Addison County community for several reasons:

Addressing Critical Need: C3EP responds to a pressing community need for accessible, high-quality childcare services. By expanding capacity and improving infrastructure, the project directly addresses the childcare crisis, ensuring that families have reliable care options to support their daily lives.

Promoting Economic Growth: The project plays a pivotal role in fostering economic growth and development within the community. By enabling parents to enter or remain in the workforce, C3EP supports workforce participation and productivity, contributing to the overall vitality of Addison County's economy. Further, the availability of safe, reliable, affordable child care attracts young families and potential homebuyers, who will in turn support local businesses and services.

Fostering Inclusivity: C3EP promotes inclusivity by catering to families of all income levels, cultures, and backgrounds. By offering tuition assistance programs and scholarships, the project ensures that childcare services are accessible to under-resourced populations, including low-income families and those experiencing homelessness.

Supporting Child Development: The project prioritizes early childhood development, providing children with a nurturing and stimulating environment conducive to learning and growth. By investing in the next generation, C3EP lays the foundation for a brighter future for the community and society as a whole.

The larger educational space that will be C3EP also provides a unique opportunity to engage with the larger community in different ways:
Community Playdates
Student Teacher Placements
Supports for Early Childhood Educators
Community Rental Space
Commercial kitchen rental

The C3EP project will benefit a diverse array of individuals and families within the community of Addison County, Vermont, and surrounding areas. Specifically:

Families: Families with children aged six weeks to five years will benefit from increased access to high-quality, affordable childcare services. This includes two-parent families, single-parent families, kin raising kin, migrant farm workers, foster families, and those experiencing homelessness. The expansion will alleviate the burden on working parents by providing reliable care options, enabling them to pursue employment or education opportunities with peace of mind. Research from Ready Nation shows that for each year a child under 3 has insufficient care, each working parent loses $5,520 per year.

PROJECT TIMELINE, MILESTONES, AND STATUS (3000 Characters):

Describe the project timeline, the current status, and impediments to proceeding. Include factors such as site control, engineering and design, financing/funding identification and commitment, and permitting. Clearly identify where the project is within the project timeline and what work remains.

In 2017, conversations started between Otter Creek Child Center, College Street Children's Center, and Middlebury College on what a possible expansion could look like. In 2018, Linda January, Executive Director of OCCC, worked on a feasibility operational budget with support from Let's Grow Kids, Building Bright Futures, and Vermont Community Loan Fund. Through this work it was decided OCCC would be able to financially sustain an expansion, based on their current operational model, by increasing capacity to 139 children a day. On April 8, 2018, the OCCC Board of Director's passed a motion to allow OCCC to work in partnership with Middlebury College on the expansion project. At this time the expansion committee was formed.

In 2019, Middlebury College brought on board D.W. Arthur Associates Architecture, Inc. as the schematic design architect. Over the next four years the expansion committee looked at multiple site locations, was delayed due to COVID-19, revised designs 10+ times, and finally landed on a design concept at 150 Weybridge Street, Middlebury, VT.

Between 2020 and 2022, the expansion team worked on different grant opportunities. A NBRC grant was received in 2022 to support refining the design and construction documents. At the end of 2022, a total of $3.1 million in Congressional Directed Funding was approved for the project. With committed funds the project moved forward with an end date in sight. The completion timeline is as follows:

Schematic Design-Finished early 2023
Design Documents and value engineering-Finished Fall 2023
Construction Documents-Finished April 2024
Bid for Construction Manager-March-April 2024
Pre-Construction Site Work-March 2024
Bid for sub-constructors-May-June 2024
OCCC Program Relocation-June 2024
Pre-Construction Site Work Continues (Preloading of Site)-June-October 2024
Construction -October 2024-September 2025
Purchase furniture, equipment, materials, and supplies-June-September 2025
Set up building-September 2025

PROJECT PRINCIPAL EXPERIENCE/PARTNERSHIPS (3000 Characters):

Describe project principals' experience managing federal or state grants, and/or successfully developed similar business models, their ability to complete the project, and describe any partnerships that will help ensure success.

Several years ago the Community Childcare Expansion Team was formed to oversee the design and construction of this new community-wide early childcare solution for Addison County. The team includes the following local childcare experts and others supporting the project:

*Cheryl Mitchell, PhD, Early Care and Learning Partnership, Inc. (ECLP), founder of Addison County Parent Child Center, and later of two other Addison County childcare programs, 10 years in the Vermont State Agency of Human Services, founder and president of the Early Care and Learning Partnership, Inc.
*Johana "Jody" Brakeley, M.D., Developmental Behavioral Pediatrician recently retired; ECLP board member.
*Linda January, Executive Director, Otter Creek Child Center;
*Lorie Mulcahy, Program Director, College Street Children's Center
*Doumina Noonan, Children's Integrated Services, Specialized Child Care Services Coordinator, Board Member of OCCC
*Holly Moriglioni, Champlain Valley Head Start
*David Provost, Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration, & Treasurer
*Sue Ritter, J.D., Special Assistant to the President, Associate Secretary of the Corporation, Director of Community Relations.
*Matthew Curran, Director of Business Services
*Trish Dougherty, Academic Coordinator, Educational Studies, Board Member of OCCC
*Early Care and Learning Partnership, Inc. Board Members, including Darla Senecal, Regional Director, Addison, Bennington and Rutland Counties, Building Bright Futures
*D.W. Arthur Associates, Architecture, an award-winning firm with significant expertise in the design of child care centers across the country

Otter Creek and College Street bring years of expertise in early childhood development. In addition, Middlebury College brings the financial resources and expertise in building design and construction of numerous College facilities. David Provost, Executive Vice President of Middlebury College, will oversee the project construction with his facilities team. With nearly 20 years of higher education administrative leadership overseeing operations of both Champlain College and Middlebury College, he was responsible for the physical expansion of Champlain's significant growth in the Burlington Hill District and oversaw the building of 10 new facilities. At Middlebury, Mr. Provost is leading the efforts to construct a new 80,000 square foot, 280 bed first year residential housing project, a new 150,000 square foot student center, and a new 40,000 square foot museum. He also has significant experience in the restoration and renovation of existing spaces both at Champlain and Middlebury.

PROJECT SUPPORT AND REGIONAL NEED (4000 Characters):

Describe how the project is consistent with identified local and regional goals, advances regional needs identified in the region's CEDS and/or regional plans or is supported by reports or public forums. Describe the community support for the project and any community engagement that has occurred. Include reference and link to region's CEDS, the municipal and/or regional plan, and reports, or forums identified. Also describe how the project leverages regional human, social, financial, cultural, and/or physical capital, and supports, compliments, or enhances existing efforts.

The primary challenge facing the broader region of Addison County, Vermont, is the acute shortage of high-quality, accessible childcare facilities. This shortage has profound implications for families, businesses, and the overall socio-economic landscape. The latest reports from Let's Grow Kids and the Vermont Department of Children and Families underscore the severity of the issue, revealing significant gaps in childcare capacity, particularly for infants. Current data shows a steady decline in infant spots since June 2012. In June 2012, Addison County had the license capacity for 215 infants. By December 2020 that figure dropped to 161 and dropped again to 145 by September 2023. With licensed childcare programs declining and existing facilities struggling to meet demand, families are left grappling with limited options, hindering workforce participation and economic growth.

C3EP meets priorities in strategic plans from the town level all the way through to the State of Vermont Strategic Plan

Town of Middlebury, VT Town Plan
Local Economy
2.4.2. Promote economic development in Middlebury that will enhance Middlebury's community character 2.4.2.1. Build partnerships with public and private stakeholder groups to capitalize on significant development opportunities
Education
2.8.6. Expand early childhood learning and development opportunities for families
2.8.6.2. Work with employers to establish childcare partnerships for quality early childhood programs, with an emphasis on infant and toddler care.

Addison County Regional Plan
C3EP meets Economy goal D(6) (p.5-6 "That there will be high-quality, affordable childcare available throughout the Addison Region to meet the needs of working parents…") and Human Services goal B(e) (p. 7-116 "To develop quality, affordable childcare services…") of the Addison County Regional Plan.

State of Vermont Strategic Plan
C3EP expands an existing business, thus aligning with the "Grow the Economy" pillar of the Vermont Strategic Plan.

C3EP also aligns with the West Central Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Goal #1- Attract New Workers and Expand the Labor Force/Action 2- Increase Access to Child Care; Goal #2- Equity/Actions 6 and 7; Goal #3- Business Development and Job Creation/Action 3 and 4; and Goal #4- Workforce Development and Employee retention.

Further, C3EP meets the Vermont Council on Rural Development/Vermont Proposition Element #5: Ensuring all children in Vermont have access to affordable, quality child care and education.

PROJECT COST, IDENTIFIED AND COMMITED FUNDS/FINANCING, AND FUNDING GAP:

Provide the total project cost and complete the simple sources and uses chart.

Total Project Cost: $ 12,445,474

Sources:

Source	Amount
NBRC SEID 2022 & Catalyst 2024	$ 747,806
Other	$ 605,800
Hoehl Family Foundation	$ 100,000
HUD (Congressional Directed)	$ 3,450,351
Middlebury College	$ 5,200,000
VT CRRP	$ 500,000
Total Sources:	$ 10,603,957

Uses:

Use	Amount
Land Acquisition	$ 200,000
Construction	$ 9,701,428
Professional Fees Soft Costs	$ 1,050,001
Permits	$ 93,453
FF&E	$ 691,376
Owner Services/Contingency	$ 709,216
Total Uses:	$ 12,445,474

Funding Gap: **$ 1,841,517**

Note: Uses must exceed sources or there is no funding gap

Budget Narrative (3000 Characters):

Describe the amount of funds/financing that have been identified and include a clear status of the funds (Received, committed, applied for, identified, etc.) including the dates of receipt, commitment, application, expected distribution, etc. Clearly identify any funding gap. Also, identify the type of resource (cash, grant, loan, sponsor in-kind, third party in-kind, etc.) and describe which resources can serve as a match, noting that, for example, some grant sources do not allow matching federal funding with other federal funds. Clearly identify any funding gap and identify the state or federal resources that you expect might help fill the gap.

The total cost for the Community Child Care Expansion Project, from design concept to move in, including all design phases, construction, start-up costs, and construction administration services is estimated at $12.4 million. The project has been awarded $3,450,351 in Congressional Directed Funding through Senator Leahy's office and $500,000 from the Vermont Community Recovery and Revitalization Program for construction costs. Supporting the design phases of the project are commitments from the Northern Borders Regional Commission for $350,000 and Let's Grow Kids/Make Way for Kids for $200,000. Northern Borders Regional Commission Catalyst Program has also committed $397,806.16 towards the purchase of furniture,equipment, and supplies. Middlebury College's planned contribution includes $5,000,000 in cash and a donation of land valued at approximately $200,000. The Hoehl Family Foundation has donated $100,000 towards the capital campaign. OCCC will contribute up to $300,000 toward the project with current cash on hand. Over the next 12 months, project leaders intend to apply for additional grants totaling $1 million.

JOB CREATION (4000 Characters):

Provide an estimate of the number of permanent and temporary jobs to be retained and/or created by the project, including the period of time over which new jobs will be created.

Once the building is complete and both OCCC and CSCC are moved into the new building we will begin slowly building our team to reach full capacity of 139 children per day. Our timeline goals for reaching full capacity is as follows:

August 2024 (Relocation of Otter Creek)
Increase Infant Capacity by 4 daily spots at OCCC
Add 2 Full Time teacher positions

October 2025
Increase Infant/Toddler Capacity by 8 daily spots
Add 3 full time teacher positions, 1 part time kitchen position

January 2026
Continue to increase toddler capacity by adding 2 more toddler rooms, 17 daily spots
Add 6 full time teacher positions, 2 full time support teachers, 2 full time coordinator positions, and 1 full time custodian/maintenance position

August 2026
Increase Preschool capacity from 1 classroom to 3 classrooms, 32 daily spots
Add 6 full time teacher positions and 2 full time support teachers

August 2027
Increase Preschool capacity from 3 classrooms to 4 classrooms, 16 daily spots
Add 3 full time teacher positions

CLEAR FORM

PRINT FORM