# CHIP Housing Project FAQ Template + Guidance

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## Guidance for Municipal Officials Using This Template

This template helps Vermont municipalities share clear information about a proposed housing project that may use the Community and Housing Infrastructure Program (CHIP). It is designed for communities that have identified a possible housing project and are beginning to talk with residents. The questions address common concerns about housing, costs, taxes, infrastructure, risks, and public input.

Municipalities can replace the text in brackets with local information, remove questions that do not apply, and add questions raised by residents.

The template can be used on a municipal website, as a public meeting handout, or as the starting point for a project information page. It is intended to help municipalities share facts and build public understanding, not to promote a particular project or persuade residents to support it.

## Match the FAQ to the Project's Stage

| Project stage | What to emphasize |
|---|---|
| Early discussion | Housing need, proposed location, possible benefits, community goals, and what is still unknown |
| Project review | Housing details, infrastructure needs, costs, funding options, and risks |
| Before major decisions | Financial commitments, written agreements, public votes, and remaining risks |

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| | |
|---|---|
| After approval | Project schedule, construction updates, spending, and progress toward housing goals |

## Important Steps Before Publishing

- **Separate facts from estimates and the unknown.** Explain which details are known and which may change. It is fine to say, "We do not know yet. We will share more information as plans move forward."
- **Avoid promises.** Do not say a project will pay for itself or will not affect taxes unless there is sound evidence for that statement.
- **Describe public and private roles.** Explain what the builder/developer will do and what the municipality may be asked to do.
- **Be clear about decisions.** Tell residents what has been approved, what has not, and who makes each decision.
- **Explain risks.** Share what could happen if homes are delayed, costs rise, or tax revenue is lower than expected.
- **Keep the page current.** Include an update date and revise answers when new information becomes available.
- **Link to supporting information.** Provide access to project plans, cost estimates, public meeting materials, and other documents.
- **Keep the answers consistent across public materials.** The same basic explanations can be used on websites, in meeting handouts, and at public information sessions.

## Suggested Related Resources

At the bottom of the project FAQ, municipalities can link to:

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- CHIP FAQs
- Tax Increment Financing FAQs
- Project plans and maps
- Housing Infrastructure Agreement and other agreements, when available
- Public meeting agendas and minutes
- Project cost and tax increment estimates
- Municipal contact information

## Build Your FAQ Over Time

Municipalities do not need to answer every question at once. Start with the questions that apply to your project and the information you have today. Add or update answers as plans move forward and more information becomes available.

Publication Date

11/10/2026

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