

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The challenges our planet faces for a sustainable future are many, and yet the potential solutions are well within our reach. We have to confront the issues and solve them in a way that is inspiring, thoughtful, and addresses not only the need for reduced energy consumption, but increases the vibrancy and livability of our urban centers.

Our proposal looks to address environmental and social sustainability in a holistic way. We are building upon the foundation that the City of Montpelier has provided us and we are enhancing the downtown core by removing desolate parking lots to create vibrant neighborhoods that are unique, interesting, and community oriented places to live, work and play. Our plans seek to make accessibility a top priority. We are activating the river's edge, creating park spaces, allowing for natural areas, developing spaces that allow for a range of activities to occur, and strengthening the Main and State Street corridors. We seek to build highly efficient and durable buildings that are environmentally friendly, powered by renewable energy, and designed to fit into the existing fabric of Montpelier. We seek to improve the transportation networks by adding infrastructure that lessens the need for the personal automobile, encourages healthy alternatives such as walking and biking and provides car-share opportunities for those occasions when a car is needed. All of these opportunities together can transform Montpelier into a strong and vibrant hub of activity where the community is engaged, healthier and doing their part to make Montpelier, and the world, carbon neutral.

Our proposal has looked at how to improve the built environment, enhance transportation opportunities, create accessible connections throughout the city, and achieve a net-zero future.

**THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

We are proposing the addition of more than 1 million square feet of new program and amenities to the City of Montpelier. These new additions will help to reinforce the Montpelier culture and downtown life by their placement, connectivity and design. The proposed buildings will blend in to the existing city scape by utilizing underdeveloped lots to fill the voids of the current City footprint with buildings that are compatible in scale, material use and composition to the existing historic character while providing opportunity for adding a modern relevance. Material choices would include brick, granite, wood, metal and glass, complementing the existing character and charm of the city.

**TRANSPORTATION**

Our proposal envisions a combination of several alternative transportation systems to make Montpelier a more connected and efficient city. Our goal is primarily to reduce ownership of the personal automobile, a product that for many decades in American society has polluted our air, used non-renewable resources, encouraged sprawl, wasted countless hours of our lives spent behind the wheel, and continues to serve as a burden and unnecessary expense for nearly every person of driving age. To achieve this goal, we envision several types of transportation systems to be enhanced or developed. These improvements include added bus and passenger rail service, a new downtown tram system, indoor and sheltered walking paths that encourage walking and biking throughout the city, an inclined tram to connect National Life with the downtown district, and car and ride share facilities that will allow people to eliminate their personal automobile in favor of this shared transportation option.

## ACCESSIBILITY, CONNECTIONS, AND NATURAL FEATURES

An important element of our master plan is the development of various public spaces interwoven with the new neighborhoods. Our plan includes community spaces connected throughout the city via accessible pedestrian paths that are linking various portions of the city together. We have included multiple types of green spaces that will be created to engage the riverfront and provide variety and choice for residents and visitors. Some areas include hardscape features such as ramps, steps, terraces, walls, and others allow for a more natural setting and would serve as a riparian buffer and wildlife habitat. Some outdoor spaces will serve as concert locations, some will have playground equipment, and others will provide a more natural playground choice. Our goal is to develop the riverfront with parkland that provides residents and visitors with fun and interesting choices that will help create a more vibrant community. By providing various options and pathways, we are ensuring accessibility to people of all ages, abilities, and preferences.

## NET-ZERO ENERGY

Both existing and new buildings throughout Montpelier will play a key role in achieving net-zero. All new buildings will be high performance buildings, designed with passive solar principals and incorporating solar PV systems on their roofs. Existing buildings will undergo energy audits and renovations to reduce their energy use, and solar PV systems will be installed on existing roofs where feasible. We anticipate that over time, most buildings will be connected to the district heat plant, and new buildings will have thermal energy storage chambers to store excess heat and reduce peak demands.

*For this challenge, we have sought to craft a solution for Montpelier that is inspiring and forward thinking, while still being relevant and viable. We have defined a template of solutions that are expandable, flexible and able to unfold as the future allows. We have built upon the existing infrastructure and improved upon it where necessary. We have expanded the urban platform of Montpelier and brought to it an increased sense of life, resilience, and harmony. Thank you!*

