



# Downtown Littleton Reconnect Project

APRIL 24<sup>TH</sup>, 2014

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FY 2014 TIGER DISCRETIONARY GRANT SUMMARY



**Project Summary**

The proposed revitalizing connection project in the historic downtown of Littleton, New Hampshire is an opportunity to improve environmental quality, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and economic vitality for the region. The revitalizing connection project would remove dated utility infrastructure, improve the existing roadway, develop outdoor community space, and create safe pedestrian and bicycle friendly paths that connect housing to ladders of opportunity. Building on the strength of public and private partnerships, these vital improvements will provide the necessary infrastructure for continued economic growth and job creation in the region.

**Project Type** Revitalization

**Type of Application** Planning & Construction

**Project Location** Town of Littleton, Grafton County, New Hampshire

Congressional District 2, Rural Area

**TIGER Grant Funds Requested** \$6 million

PROJECT COST OVERALL	
Main Street Reconstruction Phase II	\$2.16 million
Ammonoosuc Street Interconnection Phase I	\$1.44 million
Saranac Street Reconstruction Phase II	\$1.42 million
Saranac Street / Meadow Street Intersection Phase III	\$1.25 million
Riverwalk / Pedestrian Bridge Phase IV	\$1.24 million
<b>Local Match</b>	<b>\$1.51 million</b>
<b>TIGER Funds Requested</b>	<b>\$6.00 million</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7.51 million</b>

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Figure 1. Downtown Littleton Riverwalk.

**I. Project Description**

The Downtown Littleton Reconnect Project is a revitalization and multimodal connection project designed to improve safety, **RECONNECT** the Main Street to its historically neglected riverfront, **RENEW** outdated storm and wastewater infrastructure, provide alternative modes of transportation to potential employment opportunities, and **REINVIGORATE** one of the region’s main economic and job creating communities. This project is the final step in the town’s long history of revitalization projects aimed at boosting economic development and developing strong public - private partnerships within its regional and local business communities.

Leading the completion of the downtown’s revitalization movement is a strong mix of public leaders, business figures and regional planning stakeholders. The Downtown Littleton Reconnect Project will focus on several key roads, intersections and utility infrastructure upgrades to achieve its goals of reconnection. Although the town has conducted some design and preliminary engineering for portions of the project, additional engineering will be required to complete the project. For full funding and cost breakdown, **see Table 1.**

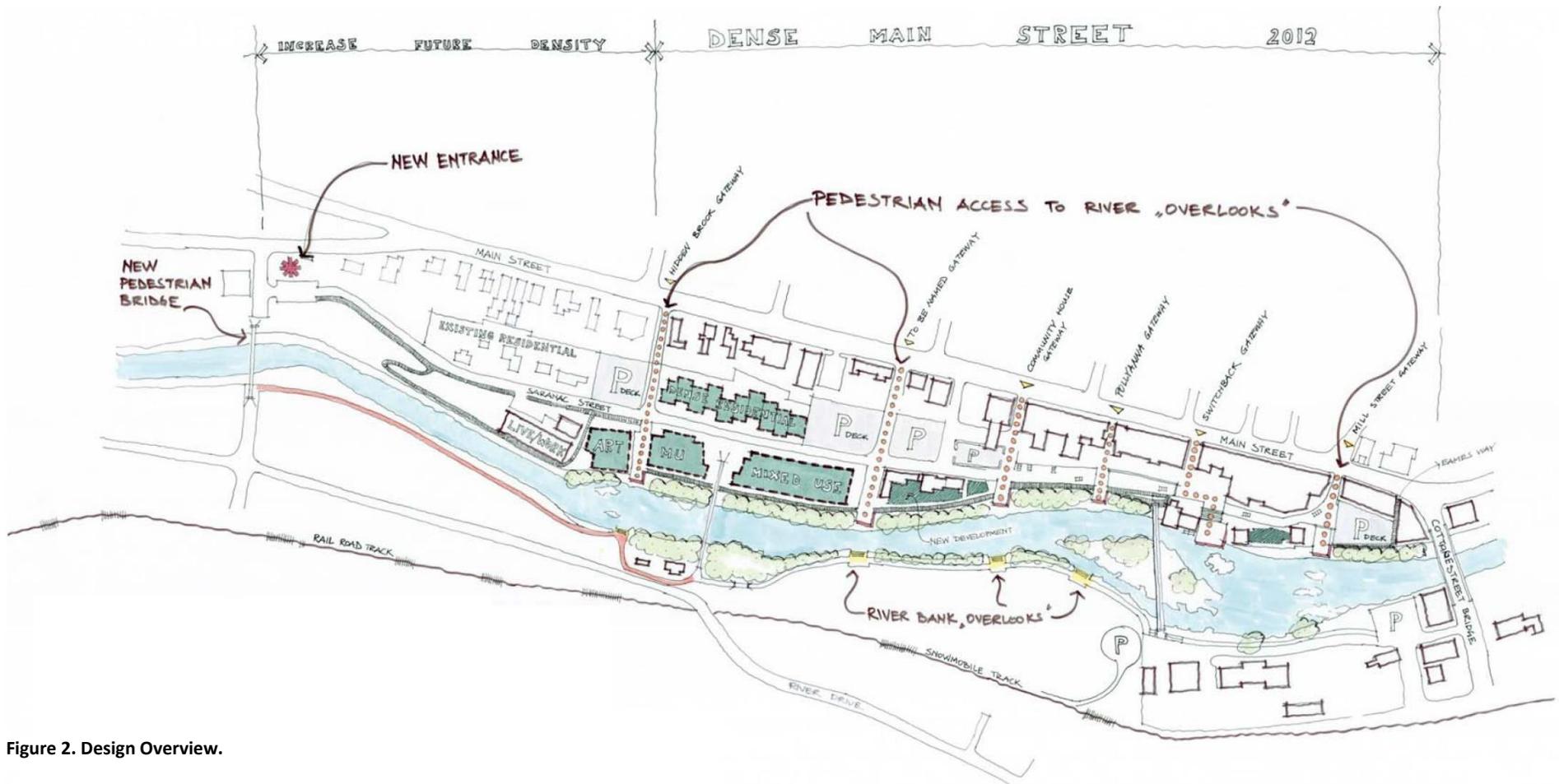


Figure 2. Design Overview.

**Table 1. Downtown Littleton Reconnect Project Funding Sources and Uses.**

**2014 TIGER GRANT APPLICATION**

**DOWNTOWN LITTLETON RECONNECT PROJECT FUNDING SOURCES AND USES**

<b>Funding Sources</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Project Percentage</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Littleton Sewer Reserve Funds	\$235,000	3%	Reserve Funds
Littleton Water and Light	\$200,000	3%	Reserve Funds
Littleton Annual Paving Allocation	\$440,000	6%	2 Year Appropriation
Littleton 2014 River District Appropriation	\$80,000	1%	Appropriated for Right of Way; Engineering
Rails to Trails - NHDOT & Bicycle/Pedestrian Grants	\$55,000	1%	\$25,000 NH Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant; \$30,000 NHDOT Rails to Trails Match
Community Development Finance Authority - Tax Credit Program	\$500,000	7%	LIDC Application Pending
<b>2014 TIGER GRANT APPLICATION</b>	<b>\$6,000,000</b>	<b>80%</b>	
<b>Total Including Match Funds</b>	<b>\$7,510,000</b>	<b>100%</b>	
<b>Funding Uses</b>			
Main Street Phase Reconstruction II	\$2,160,000	29%	VHB Est.; NHDOT Class II Highway
Ammonoosuc Street Interconnection Phase I	\$1,440,000	19%	Horizons Engineering Estimate
Saranac Street Reconstruction Phase II	\$1,420,000	19%	Horizons Engineering Estimate
Saranac Street / Meadow Street Intersection Phase III	\$1,250,000	17%	Horizons Engineering Estimate
Riverwalk / Pedestrian Bridge Phase IV	\$1,240,000	17%	HEB Engineers Estimate
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,510,000</b>	<b>100%</b>	





Figure 3. Proposed Saranac Street Realignment with Bridge Street.



Figure 4. Proposed Ammonoosuc Street / Mill Street Realignment and Reconnection.

The Downtown Littleton Reconnect Project is the next step in a long history community driven revitalization efforts for the downtown. In 2002, Littleton received Transportation Community and System Preservation funding to develop a context-sensitive solutions report that addressed the transportation and economic revitalization needs of Downtown Littleton. In partnership with the Project for Public Spaces, the town conducted a year-long community outreach project focused on infrastructure needs and improvements. Results of the outreach project were incorporated into the development and recommendations in the context-sensitive Littleton Places Report. Context-sensitive solutions focused on specific solutions to revitalize the downtown, provide alternative modes of transportation and improve the existing transportation infrastructure.

The Downtown Littleton Reconnect Project builds on the recommendations of the context-sensitive Report by focusing on necessary infrastructure improvements vital to the realization of a reconnected Downtown Littleton. With these infrastructure improvements, new and expanded pedestrian and bicycle access in the Project area will allow visitors and locals the opportunity to transit safely within the downtown and develop an area ripe for revitalization.

## II. Project Parties

The Town of Littleton is working with a number of public and private parties have expressed their support for the Downtown Littleton Reconnect Project:

- Littleton Area Chamber of Commerce
- Littleton Industrial Development Corp. (LIDC)
- Littleton Water and Light Department (LWL)
- Affordable Housing Education and Development (AHEAD)
- Northern Community Investment Corp. (NCIC)
- North Country Council, Inc. (NCC)

### III. Selection Criteria

#### A. State of Good Repair

Without a doubt the Downtown Littleton Reconnect Project will provide key improvements to the utilities and road infrastructure that will allow the town to focus on the future, and away from aging and outdated roads and utility systems. Proposed improvements include the removal of concrete road structure on Main Street / US 302 / Route 18 and Meadow Street / US 302 / Route 10, realigning the intersection of Meadow Street and Saranac Street, and the replacement of old water and sewer lines that require costly annual repairs. These improvements will benefit transportation by improving safety and operation, while addressing an ongoing impediment to accessibility and economic development.

#### B. Economic Competitiveness

Littleton conducted a preliminary economic assessment for ten parcels in the project area based on the proposed infrastructure improvements from the Downtown Littleton Reconnect Project. According to the analysis, as a result of the Project, the ten parcels, after private redevelopment, could see an increase in tax revenue of around \$2.35 million over a ten year period, or \$234,000 annually. In addition, an estimated 204 jobs would be created, with an estimated annual payroll of \$6.12 million and related annual spending power of \$18 million. Finally, it is estimated these ten parcels would provide housing for 126 new residents.

#### C. Quality of Life

The Downtown Littleton Reconnect Project will improve the quality of life for current and future residents of the immediate and surrounding area. Through the creation and improvement of pedestrian and bicycle paths in the project area, residents will be able to recreate, commute and shop in the project area safely and without the need of a car.

The Project will provide ladders of opportunity for low income housing residents located in the project area by providing an estimated 204 jobs.

Furthermore, these residents will benefit from the improvement and creation of new pedestrian and bicycle paths by providing alternative means of commuting to work. These paths would include a connection to the rails to trails path that ties into a number of job- related facilities including the Littleton Industrial Park, which provides over 1,100 jobs.



Figure 4. Downtown Littleton Reconnect Project Volunteers.

Finally, seniors will have access to a complete pedestrian walking path, running from the Senior Center to Bridge Street, across the proposed bridge, looping back along the riverfront in Littleton's downtown, and over the covered bridge to the Senior Center. **See Figure 1.** This loop will

provide priceless health and quality of life benefits to seniors living in the community.

#### **D. Environmental Sustainability**

Environmental sustainability is one of the major goals and clear future results from the Downtown Littleton Reconnect Project. Improvement and development of pedestrian and bicycle paths in the project area will encourage alternative modes of transportation within the project area as well as provide additional opportunities for residents to commute outside of the project area by a new pedestrian and bicycle connection from the downtown to the rails to trails project. For example, once connected, the link will provide residents a direct bicycle link with the Littleton Industrial Park, a development that is home to 14 employers and over 1,100 employees from around the region.

Currently storm water and sewer lines crisscross the project area and have the potential to empty into the river without proper sanitation. This Project will address these infrastructure problems and create a cleaner, more environmentally sensitive storm and sewer water collection system.

In efforts leading up to the TIGER grant application, the town agreed to work with a permaculture consortium to look at and develop an action plan that will safely remove non-native species, plant native species and design landscapes that improve storm water infiltration and prevent soil loss and erosion. Not only will this effort improve the environmental sustainability of the project, it will also provide residents and visitors an opportunity to reconnect with the local and regional ecology of the North Country right in Downtown Littleton.

#### **E. Safety**

The current layout of the project area does not offer a succinct road pattern; driveways, right of ways, lots and roads meld together. Although this has not led to many reported collisions within the project bounds, it is still a safety concern. According to the data, there have been 221 reported collisions, 28 injuries and one fatality within and immediately surrounding the project area. The one reported fatality occurred at the intersection of Main Street and Clay Street in 2002; three additional reported collisions at that intersection occurred in 2008. According to the data, the highest number of collision related injuries occurred at the intersection of Main Street and Cottage Street (10 injuries), followed by the intersection of Cottage Street and Access to the Senior Center, and the intersection of Pleasant Street/Mill Street and Main Street (two injuries).

In the Littleton Places Report, the traffic engineering firm Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., provided the town with a number of recommendations to improve vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle movements throughout the project area. The Downtown Littleton Reconnect Project will address a number of these recommendations. First, as it regards pedestrian safety, the proposed project will improve and develop of pedestrian sidewalks and pathways throughout the project area. Second, the intersection of Meadow Street and Saranac Street will be realigned. **See Figure 3.** This realignment will improve the vehicular approach to Meadow Street by moving the intersection with Meadow Street to Bridge Street. This change will improve the current steep approach grade from Saranac Street and provide a clearer light of sight for left and right turning movements.

**F. Innovation****1. In Design**

Design elements in the Downtown Littleton Reconnect Project will focus on techniques that improve infrastructure longevity and public accessibility. For example, all new sidewalks will comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act, and provide access to all persons regardless of their physical abilities.

**2. In Financing**

Littleton has a long successful history of raising funds for public projects through creative partnerships and strong public support. Littleton's Industrial Park best illustrates the strength of its public and partnerships and ability to capitalize on its efforts.

**a. Case Study Littleton Industrial Park**

For years, Littleton competed with Berlin for the highest unemployment rate. But in 1972, the directors of LIDC were determined to create jobs and reinvigorate the local and regional economy. With \$15,000 in hand from the town for a feasibility study, an analysis of land appropriate for development as an industrial park began. Using \$23,000 from a community fund drive and the balance of \$45,000 from a Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) grant the original property was purchased.

In 1975, LIDC opened the industrial park's doors, concluding in an agreement with Bumdy Corporation to be the Park's first residents.

In 1984 and 1985 LIDC requested \$481,000 from EDA, \$16,000 from FmHA, \$82,000 from the town of Littleton, and \$176,000 in loans from the three local banks. These funds were used to further improve the Park.

Recent improvements were provided through a mix of funding from LIDC, EDA and the Town of Littleton, with construction funded primarily with a \$570,000 bond issue from the town, \$350,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, an LIDC contribution of \$50,000 and \$1.5 million in EDA facility improvement and expansion funding with an additional small grant from FmHA.

Today, there are fourteen employers, with more than 1,100 employees. The property owners pay approximately \$350,000 per year in taxes to the community.