

Town of Windham

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July 14, 2014

Mr. Martin Rooney
Bureau of Planning
Maine Department of Transportation
16 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0016

Dear Mr. Rooney

The purpose of this letter is to express the Town of Windham's interest in partnering with the Maine DOT, through its Planning Partnership Initiative Grant Program (PPI) to prepare preliminary planning and engineering design alternatives to improve safety and mobility for all modes of transportation including vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian movement and prepare recommendations for improvements to landscaping and utility location within the Downtown Windham corridor along Roosevelt Trail (US Route 302). The initial analysis will include existing traffic patterns, particularly vehicle turning movements along the Downtown corridor and primary pedestrian routes, along with the use of secondary roads as alternatives to Route 302 for local traffic traveling between businesses. The conceptual design of these alternatives will provide the basis for evaluating short and long-term capital investments associated with implementing the recommendations of Windham's 21st Century Downtown Plan adopted in 2013. The study area will primarily include the Route 302 Corridor in North Windham between Page Road and Whites Bridge Road. The anticipated deliverable for this project will be a detailed capital improvement plan for the Route 302 corridor and surrounding transportation network. Projects will be ranked and organized so that they can be completed either on a priority basis or as opportunities arise to incorporate projects into private development proposals.

The Town anticipates a \$50,000 total project cost, and will commit local funds to match the State's contribution of \$25,000, or up to 50% of total project costs. The Town will comply with the PPI requirements as outlined in the PPI guide.

The Town of Windham is submitting the following, for your review, in order to determine our eligibility for this project.

Project Selection Factors:

Implementation Funding: The Town of Windham is committed to improving its road infrastructure whether it is a Town road or a State road. The Town has a proven track record of this commitment. The Town is committed to funding 50% of eligible project costs, or the full balance of project costs in excess of the anticipated MDOT contribution of \$25,000, whichever is greater.

Safety: Roosevelt Trail/Route 302 is part of the National Highway System. Roosevelt Trail experiences high traffic in the vicinity of the project site at a rate of over 20,000 vehicles per day, and is a major commuter route connecting the Lakes Region communities of Bridgton, Naples, Casco and Raymond to the Greater Portland area. The corridor is vehicle-centric and does not provide adequate measures for the safe use of other modes of transportation.

Economic Development and Job Creation: This project is critical to the Town's plan to promote economic development in North Windham. Improved levels of service on its roadways and traffic intersections will directly impact economic development in the future. Route 302 is the commercial service hub of Windham and the entire Lakes Region, a regional asset that will be made even more desirable with significant streetscape and multi-modal transportation improvements. These improvements are critical to achieving the vision presented in the award-winning 21st Century Downtown Plan for Windham.

Mobility: One of the primary goals of this effort is to design a series of improvements that will preserve capacity on Route 302 by consolidating access points, limiting turning movements, and allowing more local trips to occur without using Route 302. This study will evaluate multiple intersections and curb cuts to develop a plan for a potential reorganization of curb cuts and consolidation of access routes to reduce congestion and improve the overall level of service of the corridor. The secondary routes connecting businesses will be analyzed, with potential for new connections identified, to help relieve congestion on Route 302. Recommendations for improvements to pedestrian crossings and related infrastructure will be identified.

Degree of Betterment: The anticipated deliverable associated with this study will be a plan for capital improvements along the entire corridor that includes prioritization of individual or grouped projects that will be ranked based on their projected degree of betterment, funding requirements and ability to be "shovel-ready". Given the existing unorganized and somewhat dysfunctional network of secondary access routes and pedestrian accommodations, the anticipated degree of betterment is expected to be significant.

Percentage of Local Match: The Town is proposing a \$50,000 total project cost matching the State contribution of \$25,000 with local funds. The Town is committed to funding the full balance of project costs in excess of the anticipated MDOT contribution of \$25,000.

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Customer Benefit: This project is projected to improve the experience of those using the Route 302 corridor by reducing the disorganized network of curb cuts, providing options to access multiple business parks without going back onto Route 302, and creating safe environments for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross the busy roadway. It is also expected that the project will create additional green space and much improved aesthetics. Due to the high volume of traffic that passes through this corridor, the benefit of the improvements will be realized both locally and regionally.

GRANT REQUIREMENTS:

Federally Eligible Consultant Procurement and Project Administration: The Town is familiar with the strict consultant procurement process associated with projects receiving funding from federal sources as outlined in the Brooks Act and subsequent legislation. The Town will coordinate all efforts with the MDOT to ensure strict adherence with these processes.

Clear Purpose and Need Statement: The Town of Windham completed the 21st Century Downtown Plan, which received the “2014 Plan of the Year” accolade from the Maine Association of Planners, with the intent to dramatically transform the downtown area. The Route 302 corridor is the central artery to the Plan, with the proposed network of connecting neighborhoods and business parks requiring an organized transportation planning initiative. The work to be completed under this project is the next step in realizing the vision of the 21st Century Downtown Plan.

Deliverability: The Town of Windham is prepared to complete this project within nine months after project matching funds are made available from MDOT.

Public Involvement: Due to the regional impact to the proposed improvements, the Town intends to hold public meetings and post information in local papers to educate the public on the project impacts and schedule. It also will be necessary to have discussions and negotiations with individual property owners that will be affected by the project to determine feasibility of the plan components. The Town understands that is solely responsible for all public outreach and informational meetings associated with this project, and its staff are familiar with the Maine Sensible Transportation Policy Act.

State-Municipal Agreement: The Town of Windham understands it will be required to enter into an agreement whereby the PPI Grant amount is capped based on project estimates prior to study Kick-off, up to a maximum award of \$25,000.

Location-Specific Evaluation: The anticipated deliverable for this project will be a detailed capital improvement plan for the Route 302 corridor and surrounding transportation network. Projects will be ranked and organized so that they can be completed either on a priority basis or as opportunities arise to incorporate projects into private development proposals.

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Eligibility for Federal Surface Transportation Funding: Route 302 is a federal aid highway on the National Highway System and is eligible for funding under the Federal Surface Transportation Program.

The Town of Windham prides itself in having an excellent working relationship with the Maine DOT, and believes the Downtown Corridor Planning Project is an excellent candidate for the PPI Grant program. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'APL', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Anthony Plante
Town Manager

cc : Town Council
Windham Economic Development Corporation