

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

### *North Windham Moves: Regional Mobility - Local Access Project*

The *North Windham Moves: Regional Mobility - Local Access Project* (“Project”) will:

1. Eliminate a dangerous and inefficient rural U.S. highway bottleneck
2. Improve safety and efficiency for motorists and active transportation users
3. Provide more uniform accessibility to employment and retail as well as tourism and recreation critical to Maine’s economy
4. Implement proven modern design features that will improve pedestrian and vehicle flow
5. Meet Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) and Maine Department of Transportation (“MaineDOT”; “Agency”) standards for active transportation infrastructure
6. Create a rapid, efficient and modern supply chain path for goods and services throughout the region

Consistent with the *FY 2022-2026 U.S. DOT Strategic Plan*, the Project meets five DOT goals including **Safety, Economic Strength and Global Competitiveness, Equity, Climate and Sustainability and Transformation**.<sup>1</sup> It does so by implementing safe, sensible and environmentally sound improvements to transportation infrastructure in Maine’s southwest region. Project details include:

1. **Redesigning US 302** and adjacent right-of-way from River Road north to Whites Bridge Road, including:
  - constructing raised center medians to control dangerous left turns
  - building safe and efficient center turn lanes to organize traffic
  - widening the right-of-way to accommodate bicycle lanes
  - reducing ingress/egress paths to stores and restaurants to funnel traffic safely and efficiently
  - improving sight distance
  - building sidewalks on both sides of US 302
  - improving existing sidewalks by relocating obstacles such as utility poles and fire hydrants
  - building and/or redesigning crosswalks to be safer and ADA compliant
  - installing improved street lighting
2. **Replacing aging traffic signals with smart signals** at:
  - River Road & US 302
  - US 302 & SR’s 35/115 (Boody’s Corner intersection)
  - US 302 at Shaw’s Supermarket Plaza entrance
  - US 302 & Landing Road
  - US 302 & Franklin Drive
  - US 302 & Whites Bridge Road/Anglers Road
3. **Constructing an *East Connector Road, Middle Connector Road* and *West Connector Road*** – three connecting routes – behind the region’s commercial center to ease congestion on busy and dangerous north-south U.S. Highway 302 (“US 302”; “Roosevelt

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2022-04/US\\_DOT\\_FY2022-26\\_Strategic\\_Plan.pdf](https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2022-04/US_DOT_FY2022-26_Strategic_Plan.pdf), page IV

Trail”), east-west State Route 35 (“SR 35”) and east-west State Route 115 (“SR 115”), all high-volume thoroughfares:

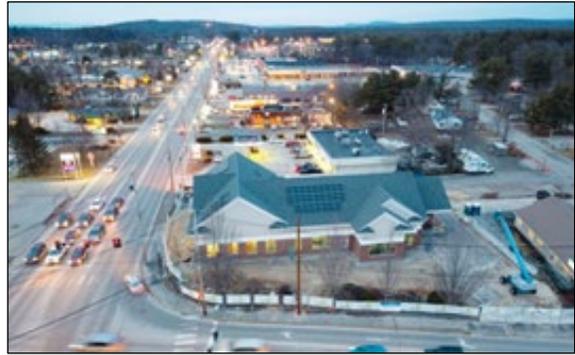
- *East Connector Road*: new two-lane road constructed from SR 115 northward to Franklin Drive and road rehabilitation from intersection of the new Connector Road west to US 302
  - *Middle Connector Road*: new two-lane road constructed from the US 302/Franklin Drive intersection southwest to Landing Road
  - *West Connector Road*: new two-lane road constructed from the north end of Manchester Road north to Whites Bridge Road as well as road rehabilitation from the north end of Manchester Road south to SR 35
4. **Constructing ADA-compliant active transportation multi-use pathways and crosswalks:**
- 11,700 feet of new multi-use pathways alongside new connector roads as well as along Manchester Road and Franklin Drive
  - crosswalks and sidewalks along US 302 and SR’s 35 & 115 where they do not currently exist.
5. **Improving State Routes 35 and 115** from Basin Road east to Sabbady Point Road, including:
- constructing raised center medians to control dangerous left turns
  - eliminating intersections in close proximity to others to reduce traffic backups
  - installing smart traffic signals
  - improving sight distance
  - building sidewalks on both sides of the roads
  - improving existing sidewalks by relocating obstacles such as utility poles and fire hydrants
  - building and/or redesigning crosswalks to be safer and ADA compliant
  - installing improved lighting

The section of US 302 in the Project area extends for a distance of 8,500 feet – from River Road to the south to White’s Bridge Road to the north. A center turn lane measuring more than 6,500 feet is in place in this section today. A detailed Project Map is located in the Attachments section.

Located in southwestern Maine, North Windham is 15 miles northwest of Maine’s largest city – Portland. It is a subset of the encompassing Town of Windham which covers 20 square miles of the area. North Windham encompasses the area commercial district. It is the gateway between Maine’s scenic coast and the mountains, ski resorts, snowmobile trails, summer camps and vast forests of Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire. North Windham is an important connection for Maine’s primary economic engine, tourism. North Windham is located on the eastern shore of Sebago Lake, the largest freshwater lake in southwest Maine. The region is rural and North Windham’s commercial district serves mostly rural residents. Despite that, it is located in a very small sliver of the Portland Maine Urbanized Area. North Windham has a population of 5,274 residents enumerated in the 2020 Census, an increase of 370 from the 2010 Census. [The 20 square mile Town of Windham had a 2020 population of 18,434, an increase of 1,433 from the

2010 census<sup>2</sup>.] North Windham is located in Cumberland County with a population of 303,069 residents as of the 2020 Census, an increase of 21,395 from the 2010 tally.<sup>3</sup> It is the rural region's commercial center, saving a 15-mile trip to Portland on US 302, which suffers heavy traffic at times as the route enters Portland's suburbs. The Maine Turnpike (Interstate 95) is six miles east of town – providing the quickest access to northern Maine and Canada from the eastern U.S.

US 302 is a principal arterial route on the National Highway System.<sup>4</sup> State Routes 35 and 115 are state Rural Minor Arterial roadways. The intersection of these roads in North Windham is known as 'Boody's Corner'. SR 35 begins at this intersection westward while SR 115 begins at Boody's Corner and travels east. Both roads are collectively known as 'Tandberg Trail'. While the three thoroughfares are used to transport a modest amount of freight, they are not part of the National Highway Freight Network. Traffic through Boody's Corner during a typical peak morning hour includes 3,112 vehicles. During a typical peak hour of evening traffic, the intersection handles 3,945 vehicles.<sup>5</sup> Motorists rely on the roads to reach far distances in the state and neighboring states to the west. Over time, Maine's population has grown along its urban coastline as well as the rural region surrounding Sebago Lake. North Windham became a primary rural regional commercial center outside of Portland – home to employment, healthcare, dining and shopping. US 302 now serves two shopping malls, two major grocery stores, numerous fast-food restaurants, and big-box stores including Walmart, Home Depot and Lowe's.



In the 1990s, US 302 in North Windham expanded from a two-lane road to five lanes. In recent years, a few sidewalks have been constructed in the area but have not been part of an organized formal Project. As the rural commercial center grew over time, US 302, SR 35 and SR 115 began performing a dual purpose that was never intended: serving as *both* rural through routes connecting regions *and* local streets hosting ingress and egress points for a growing number of shops and restaurants. Transportation efficiency, critical to the region, began to suffer and with it the region stagnated and traffic safety suffered. To combat this, a patchwork of minor infrastructure improvements was made but has proven inefficient and did not consider future needs for safety, management of volume growth or pedestrian requirements. Vehicle crashes rose because alongside each new business came an individual ingress and egress path to an individual parking lot. That inefficient design has led to a high volume of left turns, crashes, injuries,

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/windhamtowncumberlandcountymaine,ME/PST045221>

<sup>3</sup>

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/ME,cumberlandcountymaine,northwindhamcdpmaine/PST045221>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.maine.gov> > descriptionofMaineNHS

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.windhammaine.us/DocumentCenter/View/8030/NorthWindhamMoves-FinalReport-01102022>, page 20 diagram, 2021 adjusted Volumes

confusion and disorder. Contributing to the disorder are overhead lane designation signs and span wires holding them as well as wood poles connecting the span wires. They serve as an outdated and inefficient way to display traffic information and contribute to sign clutter and sight distance issues along the corridor.

Recently, extensive evaluations of traffic patterns and pedestrian concerns culminated in the 2022 *North Windham Moves: Regional Mobility, Local Access – Transportation Planning & Feasibility Study*.<sup>6</sup> MaineDOT held numerous public input sessions (noted in the feasibility study) and partnered with transportation planning, design and landscape firms to develop a list of required improvements the Agency intends to fund through approval of this Project’s application.

Preliminary design of the Project at the 30 percent design level is complete and was used to estimate costs for the budget. There are no previously completed Project components. Through other funding streams, the Town of Windham has or will complete numerous other improvements including some that will complement the Project while others that will benefit other parts of the area outside of North Windham. In total, the Town of Windham is spending \$10 million to improve the region:

Year	Description	Location	Cost
2022	Project Engineering: Bicycle/Pedestrian Trail/Path	Bridge Street to Route 202 Crossing in Windham	\$450,000
2022	Bicycle/Pedestrian Trail Safety Improvements	Begins at Depot St., extends north 0.23 of a mile to Mountain Division Trail crossing	\$525,000
2022	Installation of adaptive traffic signals at various intersections	Route 115 to Trails End Road	\$1,450,000
2023/24	Highway Paving	US 202 north 2.85 miles	N/A
2023/24	Highway Safety and Spot Improvements	Intersection of Route 302 & Albion Road	\$156,000
2023/24	Install Traffic Signal Backplates with Reflective Strips	Route 302	\$395,000
2023/24	Highway Construction/Rehabilitation	Begins 0.45 mi. west of Outpost Dr. extending west 0.14 of a mile, includes roundabout intersection with Route 202	\$585,000
2023/24	Highway Bridges	Loveitt Bridge - located 0.13 of a mile north of Laskey Road	\$1,000,000
2023/24	Highway Bridges	Varney's Bridge - located 0.43 of a mile from Route 4	\$1,500,000
2023/24	New Sidewalk Construction	West side of Route 302, begins at Shaw's Supermarket north 0.48 mi. to Amato Drive	\$3,100,000
2024	Traffic Signal Modifications	Route 302	\$855,000

The town has lacked funding to complete a full improvement plan to make it holistically safer and transportation more efficient. That’s why this Project has been designed and thoughtfully planned out. A detailed Statement of Work focusing on the technical and engineering aspects of the Project is located immediately following this text.

For years, North Windham has recognized the need to make numerous improvements to core

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.windhammaine.us/DocumentCenter/View/8030/NorthWindhamMoves-FinalReport-01102022>

infrastructure. The town developed a study back in 2013 that identified transportation-related needs, included public engagement and created plans for implementation. Many of the results from that study are incorporated into the Project. The *North Windham 21st Century Downtown Plan*.<sup>7</sup>

- made specific recommendations for closing and consolidating business entrances along US 302 and installing wide landscaped medians to smooth traffic flow throughout the commercial district
- called for construction and reconstruction of sidewalks to improve pedestrian safety and encourage mobility
- called for improved pedestrian pathway lighting along US 302 by upgrading utility pole-mounted streetlights through the corridor to energy-efficient LED fixtures and adding additional streetlights
- suggested relocating existing overhead utility lines to underground right-of-way ducts along US 302

The town received funding through MaineDOT's *Municipal Partnership Initiative ("MPI")*<sup>8</sup> Program to install smart traffic signals at four intersections along US 302 from Boody's Corner north to Trail's End Road. More than \$1.3 million in grant funding from the *Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System ("PACTS")* has been awarded to North Windham to improve sidewalks along US 302 from Boody's Corner north to Franklin Drive.<sup>9</sup> In summer 2023, the town will commence construction of a \$40.6 million sewer upgrade project to replace septic systems at businesses in the commercial district with a state-of-the-art sewer system.<sup>10</sup> With limited funding and growing environmental-related concerns about the condition of water in the region, the town chose, with resident input, to fund the sewer system. Other plans include building a new fire station at Franklin Drive and East Connector Road and a new middle school in the area, both pending Project completion. The Town of Windham is working to connect active transportation space as well. The *Windham Open Space and Recreation Master Plan*<sup>11</sup> outlines how the North Windham multiuse trail can connect to destinations in Windham to create a viable cross-town trail network. The town realizes the need to expand these options.

The Project is *Urban*; it is located within the Portland, Maine Urbanized Area.<sup>12</sup> It is not located in an Area of Persistent Poverty – 1990 Census Poverty Rate: 8 percent; 2000 Census Poverty Rate: 7.9 percent.<sup>13</sup> The Project is not located in a Historically Disadvantaged Community.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.windhammaine.us/220/21st-Century-Downtown-Plan#:~:text=The%20North%20Windham%2021st%20Century%20Downtown%20Master%20Plan%20is%20both,the%20capacity%20of%20Roosevelt%20Trail>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.maine.gov/mdot/pgc/cbi/municipal/index.shtml>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gpcog.org/DocumentCenter/View/910/PACTS-2019-2022-Transportation-Improvement-Program-PDF>, page 36

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.windhammaine.us/771/North-Windham-Sewer-Project>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.windhammaine.us/664/Open-Space-Plan>

<sup>12</sup>

[https://www2.census.gov/geo/maps/dc10map/UAUC\\_RefMap/ua/ua71263\\_portland\\_me/DC10UA71263.pdf](https://www2.census.gov/geo/maps/dc10map/UAUC_RefMap/ua/ua71263_portland_me/DC10UA71263.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> <https://maps.dot.gov/BTS/GrantProjectLocationVerification/>

<sup>14</sup> <https://maps.dot.gov/BTS/GrantProjectLocationVerification/>

## **Statement of Work**

### *North Windham Moves: Regional Mobility - Local Access Project*

The Town of Windham collaborated with MaineDOT in 2022 to complete a transportation planning and feasibility study called *North Windham Moves: Regional Mobility, Local Access*. The study evaluated, analyzed and recommended improvements to local mobility and accessibility for the commercial district while also providing safety and mobility improvements for regional users along U.S. Route 302. Preliminary design alternatives were explored alongside public input. MaineDOT and the Town of Windham have entered into an agreement to adopt the study and advance the Project through preliminary design, final design, advertising and construction. Preliminary design is complete. The Project includes full reconstruction and rehabilitation sections along US 302 including mill and fill overlays, signalized intersection upgrades, the addition of sidewalks, multiuse paths, median islands, safer turn lanes and access management measures while preserving access to businesses.

Construction of the East and West Connectors will take place initially, which will include all drainage, sidewalks, multiuse paths, base and surface pavements, street lighting and pedestrian safety features.

Upon completion of the connector roads, construction efforts will move to US 302, Route 35, Route 115 and Whites Bridge Road. This includes replacing traffic signals and constructing median islands, sidewalks, safe turn lanes, drainage upgrades, base and surface pavements, sidewalks and street lighting.

All design and construction efforts will be governed by USDOT and MaineDOT regulations and specifications. If selected for funding, MaineDOT looks forward to signing a comprehensive agreement with USDOT that includes additional detail outlining all Project parameters and the steps to follow for cost reimbursement. MaineDOT also welcomes the opportunity to create periodic construction and performance reports as required.