Kurt Gaertner  
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs  
100 Cambridge Street, 9th Floor  
Boston, MA 02114  

October 23, 2017  

Dear Mr. Gaertner:  
The Town of Littleton’s Master Plan Implementation Committee is pleased to submit this response to Grant Announcement BD-18-1042-ENV-ENV01-20081; Alternate ID: ENV 18 DCS 11 for the “Planning Assistance Grant” announcement dated September 19, 2017.  

Thank you for the opportunity to present Littleton’s project proposals. We hope you find that Littleton’s application meets the guidelines for funding under the Planning Assistance Grant Program.  

Sincerely,  

Michael Zeldin, Chair  
Master Plan Implementation Committee  
Town of Littleton  
mhzeldin@verizon.net  

Anna Hueston, Vice Chair  
Master Plan Implementation Committee  
Town of Littleton  
amhueston4ec@gmail.com  

Maren A. Toohill  
Planning Administrator/Permit Coordinator  
Town of Littleton  
MToohill@littletonma.org  
978/540-2425
GRANT APPLICATION PROJECT PROPOSAL:

PROJECT DEFINITION:
The Town of Littleton will use Planning Assistance Grant funds to implement Littleton Master Plan 2030, focusing on revitalization of Littleton Common. Funds would be used for two tasks associated with revitalization of Littleton Common: (1) prepare a detailed area plan for the Littleton Common and Beaver Brook area to guide redevelopment, and (2) Zoning amendments to allow and promote revitalization of Littleton Common.

Task # 1 – Detailed Area Plan for Littleton Common

Task #1 Deliverables:
D1-1: Provide three or more professional, 3-D, computer-generated, dynamic designs of alternative redevelopment scenarios for Littleton Common and Beaver Brook area.
D1-2: Prepare a detailed economic analysis of redevelopment scenarios.
D1-3: Conduct a substantive public outreach program to elicit significant input from residents, property owners, municipal officials, and other stakeholders.
D1-4: Present update at Fall 2018 Town Meeting
D1-5: Prepare and present a “preferred scenario”, taking into account feedback from public outreach, detailed economic analysis, and reflecting goals of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Littleton’s Community Compact, and Smart Growth/Smart Energy Toolkit.
REPORTING: Quarterly reports to EEA

Task #1 Measures of Success: Redevelopment scenarios reflect goals outlined in the Littleton Master Plan 2030, preferred scenario is supported by stakeholders, deliverables are provided on time, and within budget, and work process coordinates with ongoing Town work on a Smart Sewer for Littleton Common.
Task #1 Budget: $80,000
EEA Share: $30,000
Non-State Match: $50,000 Town Meeting Appropriations
Task #1 Timeline:
- Dec. 31, 2017 Sign Contract with EEA
- Grant Award – March 1, 2018 Competitive bid process, interview, contract with consultant(s), issue Notice to Proceed
- March 1 – August 1, 2018 Develop alternative redevelopment scenarios for Littleton Common (Deliverable D1-1)
- July 15 – September 1, 2018 Develop and present detailed economic analysis of scenarios (Deliverable D1-2)
- September 1 – January 1, 2019 Vet alternative redevelopment scenarios, including economic analysis, with all stakeholders (Deliverable D1-3)
- Fall 2018 Town Meeting: present update at Town Meeting (Deliverable D1-4)
- January 1, 2019 – March 1, 2019 Finalize and present preferred scenario (Deliverable D1-5)
- March 1, 2018 – March 1, 2019 Quarterly reports to EEA

Task #: 2 – Amend Zoning and General Bylaws to allow and promote revitalization of Littleton Common consistent with the preferred alternative identified in Task #1.

Task #2 Deliverables:
D2-1: Zoning Diagnostic report that determines to what extent Littleton’s Zoning Bylaws conform to state and federal laws.
D2-2: Framework paper that assesses strengths and weaknesses of Littleton’s bylaws to meet the goals of the Town’s Master Plan town wide.
D2-3: Narrowing focus to redevelopment of Littleton Common, provide at least 2 reading drafts of zoning bylaw amendments to allow and promote revitalization consistent with the preferred scenario identified in Task #1.
D2-4: Public outreach, including all stakeholders
D2-5: Map amendment: at least one draft map, and final map
D2-6: Public Hearing(s)
D2-7: Town Meeting
D2-8: Develop and adopt Board Regulations to implement new Zoning and/or General Bylaws

REPORTING: Quarterly reports to EEA

Task #2 Measures of Success: Deliverables reflect the Goals of the Littleton Master Plan 2030, allow and promote revitalization of Littleton Common to align with the “preferred scenario”, zoning bylaw amendments are supported by the Planning Board and other stakeholders and deliverables are provided on time and within budget.

Task #2 Budget: $70,000
- EEA Share: $20,000
- Non-State Match: $50,000 Town Meeting Appropriation
Task #2 Timeline:
- Dec. 31, 2017 Sign Contract with EEA
- Grant Award – March 1, 2018 Competitive bid process, interview, and contract with consultant(s), Notice to Proceed
- March 1 – July 1, 2018 Prepare and present zoning diagnostic report (Deliverable D2-1)
- July 1, 2018 – November 1, 2018 Prepare and present framework paper (Deliverable D2-2)
- January 1, 2019 – March 1, 2019 Present first two reading drafts of zoning or general bylaw amendments to allow and promote revitalization of Littleton Common in line with the preferred scenario (Deliverable D2-3)
- February 1 – April 1, 2018 Public outreach; while public outreach is ongoing throughout the entire project, this timeframe will be used to elicit responses to the draft zoning bylaw amendments (Deliverable D2-4)
- February 1 – April 15, 2019 Map amendment draft and final map (Deliverable D2-5)
- April 1 – May 1, 2019 Public Hearing(s) on zoning bylaw amendment(s) (Deliverable D2-6)
- May 2019 Town Meeting (Deliverable D2-7)
- May Town Meeting – June 30, 2019 Develop and present Board regulations (Deliverable D2-8); project wrap-up
- June 30, 2019 final billing: final project report to EEA.

Budget Summary for Requested Funds from EEA:
Task #1: $30,000 Detailed Area Plan for Littleton Common
 FY18: $20,000
 FY19: $10,000

Task #2: $20,000 Amend Zoning
 FY18: $10,000
 FY19: $10,000

Total Requested Funds: $50,000
 FY18: $30,000
 FY19: $20,000

Local match: Local match of $100,000 (200%) is proposed; letter from Keith Bergman, Town Administrator is attached as Exhibit A.

If proposed task is implementing a recommendation from a Master Plan or other plan, Climate Vulnerability Assessment, or other document include a copy of relevant pages;

The proposed project reflects goals of the Littleton Master Plan, Hazard Mitigation Plan, Housing Production Plan, Complete Streets Policy, Complete Streets Implementation Program and Community Compact (details below) Selected excerpts from the Master Plan 2030 are attached as Exhibit B.
The Littleton Master Plan 2030 “Cultivating the Future” was adopted by the Planning Board on April 20, 2017 and accepted by the May 1, 2017 Annual Town Meeting. On April 13, 2017, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approved Littleton’s Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The Littleton Master Plan 2030 reflects the Littleton Housing Production Plan, adopted in 2014 by the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen.

In 2015, the Town entered into a Community Compact, in part to address first mile/last mile transportation:

Regional Transportation Management Association: The Towns of Acton, Boxborough, Littleton, Maynard and Woburn partner on CrossTown Connect (CTC) to expand transportation opportunities which promote economic development.

- Work with CTC to address first mile / last mile / reverse commute issues. The State is committed to changing the train schedule to make the current train arrive earlier in the morning and adding a second early morning train that will make it more viable to travel by transit to work. The implementation of these time changes cannot happen until construction is finished.
- Work with the CTC, the RTAs and local employers to convert the promise of reverse commuting into reality by investing and coordinating so that the last mile systems are created.
If proposing zoning or other regulatory revision, please include a specific listing of bylaws/ordinances or other regulations to be developed;

Town of Littleton will consider new or update current zoning and general bylaws that foster revitalization of the Littleton Common including guidelines and guardrails as follows:

- Business Improvement Districts (BID)
- District Improvement Financing (DIF) – stormwater, LID focus
- Form Based Codes (FBC)
- Historic Resource Protection
- Mill Revitalization Districts (MRD)
- Smart Energy
- Smart Parking
- *Smart Sewer – currently under study
- *Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)
- Water Resource Management
- *By-Right Permitting – for projects that meet preferred scenario guidelines

Town of Littleton has already proposed or adopted zoning bylaws and practices from the Smart Growth/Smart Energy Toolkit which could be updated to better meet goals of the Master Plan:

- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) – Adopted May 2017
- *Expedited Permitting – Adopted May 2010 for two Littleton Common parcels; consider adding more locations
- Inclusionary Zoning – Proposed Fall 2017 Town Meeting
- *Low Impact Development (LID) – Adopted May 2007 could be updated
- Open Space Design (OSD) – Adopted May 1990, could be updated
- Senior Residential Development – Proposed Fall 2017 Town Meeting
- Solar Bylaw – Adopted May 2011
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) – Utilized for several projects in Littleton
- *Village Common Business and Beaver Brook Overlay Districts– Adopted May 2010, includes mixed-use by Special Permit, could be updated, expanded

Future planning exercises could be undertaken to consider zoning bylaw and practices from the Smart Growth/Smart Energy Toolkit:

- Agricultural Preservation
- Chapter 40R
- Natural Resource Protection Zoning (NRPZ)
- Wind Power
- Sign Bylaws
- Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)
- Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

* denotes areas that seem ripe for proposal; others may rise to the top as this planning project moves forward.

This planning grant project includes, as a project deliverable, Board Regulations for any and all Zoning or General Bylaws adopted to assure capacity within the Town to properly utilize the new “tools in our tool box”.
EXPLANATION AS TO HOW PROPOSED ACTIVITIES MEET EVALUATION CRITERIA

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

Advances sustainable development by directly, quickly, and significantly improving growth:

- Establishes by-right zoning that expedites local permitting;
- Enhances land use regulation in an area of rapid growth or high natural resource value;

New bylaws require significant resident, local board member, and property owner support in order to pass Town Meeting. Zoning Bylaws that provide the framework to allow and encourage revitalization that meets the “preferred scenario” will be supported if an extensive economic impact analysis is conducted and if the public input process is thorough. The Town of Littleton is committed to tackling goals of the Master Plan for revitalization of Littleton Common and updating our Bylaws to encourage new mixed-use development, while being mindful of Historic Resources. Grant funds would greatly enhance our ability to present alternative revitalization scenarios, allowing the Town to contract with design professionals to utilize dynamic 3D modeling to show alternatives, to contract with land use and public outreach specialists to broaden our public outreach to include as many stakeholders as possible, including residents, property owners, and local board members. Building on the Planning Board’s adoption of the Littleton Master Plan 2030 on April 20, 2017, and the May 1, 2017 Town Meeting vote to support the Littleton Master Plan 2030, the Master Plan Implementation Committee strives to provide the framework and funding to implement the Master Plan.

Utilizes funding efficiently;

Littleton is not identified as a community in need and has no identified Environmental Justice populations. However, strict financial goals and guidelines will be utilized throughout the process of implementing the Master Plan.

Implements a Master, Climate Change (mitigation or adaptation), Open Space, Housing Production, or other Plan;

Littleton’s Master Plan, Hazard Mitigation Plan, Housing Production Plan, and Open Space and Recreation Plan all call for revitalization of Littleton Common and a review of zoning bylaws.

Involves more than one municipality collaborating regionally on similar and related tasks;

While Littleton often leads in regional collaboration, this project is proposed as a local project. Transit and transportation improvements that result from this project would provide benefits on a regional level.

Provides a match above the required 25%;

200% local match proposed.

Implements a Smart Growth Toolkit technique;
The project goal is to implement several Smart Growth Toolkit techniques, including by-right zoning, protection of historic resources, mixed use zoning, form-based code, and Transfer of Development Rights.

Advances a Community Compact Best Practice commitment;
Littleton’s Community Compact (2015) addresses necessary transportation and transit improvements. Revitalization of Littleton Common will include better connectivity with the Littleton Commuter Rail Station, and sidewalk improvements. Consultation and coordination with MassDOT, as a stakeholder, will be an important piece of the process, as Littleton Common is located at the intersection of Interstate Route 495, and State Routes 2A/119 and 110/225, all to facilitate the first mile/last mile issues in the Region.

Demonstrates consistency with the MA Sustainable Development Principles
a. Provides for sustainable housing production;
High nitrate levels in groundwater at Littleton Common has prompted the Town to undertake detailed studies for siting a Smart Sewer project for Littleton Common. This proposal for an EEA grant-funded project would be coordinated with and support outreach efforts undertaken for the Smart Sewer project. Adding public sewer in Littleton Common would allow growth in an area of Town the Master Plan identifies as needing revitalization. An Update of the Mixed Use zoning allowed in Littleton Common and adding Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) that may result from this project would provide sustainable housing production.

b. Delivers a substantial energy or environmental benefit (e.g. better climate resilience, reduced energy use, protection of critical habitats, or reduced greenhouse gas emissions);
Littleton is a Green Community, and has adopted the "stretch code" for all new residential building construction. Climate resilience, reduced energy use, protection of critical habitats, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions would all benefit if TDR is adopted as a result of this project. Close coordination with, and support for ongoing Smart Sewer studies for Littleton Common will also provide energy and environmental benefits.

c. Facilitates walking, biking, and transit use.
Complete Streets improvements in the Littleton Common for bicycle and pedestrian use, and closing the first mile/last mile gap (outlined in the Community Compact) between Littleton Common and the Littleton Commuter Rail Station would facilitate walking, biking, and transit use.
APPENDIX A
October 20, 2017

Mr. Kurt Gaertner
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02114

Re: Planning Assistance Grant Application; Local Matching Funds

Dear Mr. Gaertner:

The letter will constitute the Town of Littleton's notice of intent to provide a total of $100,000 in local matching funds for the $50,000 grant application being submitted by the Littleton Master Plan Implementation Committee to the Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs under EOEEA's Planning Assistance Grants program.

The $100,000 local match is from two sources. First, there is a balance of $20,000 in a May 1, 2017 Annual Town Meeting article which the Master Plan Implementation Committee has made available for this purpose. Second, the October 30, 2017 Special Town Meeting warrant contains a funding request for an additional $80,000 to be expended by the Master Plan Implementation Committee for costs associated with implementation of the master plan, including development of a master plan for Littleton Common and a comprehensive review of the zoning by-law. The October article has the support of the Finance Committee, Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, and Master Plan Implementation Committee.

Thank you very much for your consideration of the Town's grant application.

Sincerely,

Keith A. Bergman
Town Administrator
APPENDIX B
The revitalization of Littleton Common was consistently among the most popular topics of discussion throughout the Master Plan process. It is also a topic that will require actions that touch on every element of the Master Plan with strategies that specifically integrate infrastructure, circulation, land use/zoning, and economic development policies.

The Town is currently embarking on an important study to determine possible solutions for bringing wastewater treatment to this area. This is an important step as it may be challenging to facilitate the type of mixed-use, town center development residents are looking for absent a way to deal with additional wastewater. Future use of land and buildings in this area should be considered in the context of the infrastructure needed to support it, and whether current zoning regulations allow for redevelopment and reuse consistent with the community's vision.

Caught at the Crossroads
Littleton Common is bisected by two major state routes which generate a lot of through traffic during peak travel times. This creates challenges for pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as patrons of local businesses. The Town should continue to work closely with MassDOT to implement transportation improvements consistent with the future vision for the area.

COMMUNITY INPUT
from the two-day charrettes

The Town held a two-day charrette to hear resident ideas for how to improve the Common in the future. Key ideas included:

- Find adaptive reuse options for the Conant Houghton mill complex.
- Improve pedestrian safety and connectivity with more sidewalks and crosswalks. Introduce bike lanes and other bike infrastructure where appropriate.
- Improve the intersection of Goldsmith Street, King Street, and Stevens Street.
- Redevelop building at 476-482 King Street (Oriental Market, Vinyl Vault, Electronics Plus).

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
from the Master Plan

- Prepare a detailed plan for Littleton Common to guide redevelopment and infrastructure investments.
- Change zoning for Littleton Common to encourage redevelopment consistent with the area master plan.
- Invest in infrastructure to enhance walking, biking, parking, and signage to make it easier and more convenient for customers and residents to visit Littleton businesses.
- Evaluate the recommendations of the upcoming Littleton Common Sewer Strategic Plan and determine next steps.
- Determine appropriate pathway forward for modifications to state-owned roadways around Littleton Common.
1. Manage growth by allowing greater density in places where it makes sense to intensify land use, e.g., in recognized activity areas, near the train station, around the Common, and in older industrial or commercial areas where redevelopment opportunities exist.

Per the recommendations below, develop a series of area or neighborhood plans to put each location in its proper context. The plans should incorporate an analysis of:

- land use and zoning changes;
- scale, dimensions, and designs for future development;
- public infrastructure and services needed to support future development; and,
- a review of natural resources and environmental concerns.

- Adopt effective redevelopment/reuse policies, including "streamlined" or efficient permitting procedures such as joint public hearings, performance zoning (as an alternative to special permits).

2. Prepare a detailed master plan for the Littleton Common and Beaver Brook area to guide redevelopment.

Littleton Common will continue to play its historic role as a key center for social and economic activity. If wastewater issues can be satisfactorily addressed it has the potential for significant redevelopment that can boost economic opportunities, provide more diverse housing and meet other community needs. As demonstrated by the results of the Littleton Common Charrette in September, 2016, there is broad support for redevelopment that follows historic precedents and creates a more attractive and walkable center. A detailed master planning process for the area would continue the conversation among residents, property owners, and business owners to build a consensus on desired land uses, building heights, setbacks, parking areas, architectural styles, needed streetscape improvements and other elements. The planning process should also address transportation and traffic management around the Common. Engaging property owners early and often during this process will be critical to achieving successful outcomes for Littleton Common.

3. Undertake a detailed audit of Littleton's Zoning Bylaw and develop recommendations for updates and changes.

Littleton's current Zoning Bylaw was adopted in 1988 and has been changed and added to many times since. The successful implementation of many Master Plan recommendations will require zoning updates and changes. The Town should consider undertaking a thorough audit of the current Bylaw to determine deficiencies and address those immediately. The Town should improve the Bylaw by making it clearer and easier to use and by making adjustments where needed to support the implementation of this Master Plan's goals and recommendations.

4. Change zoning for the Littleton Common and the Beaver Brook area to encourage redevelopment according to the area master plan.

Assuming a consensus is achieved on the desired density and mix of land uses, there are many zoning techniques that can guide and encourage redevelopment. Options could include:

- Allowing multi-family housing in the Village Common and Beaver Brook overlay districts.
- Allowing mixed-use buildings in the Beaver Brook district, as currently allowed in VC.
- Encouraging parcel consolidation by allowing higher density for developers who assemble parcels and create a cohesive plan.
- Adopting a form-based code with a detailed regulating plan that would establish more precise locations and design standards for buildings, roads, parking areas, streetscape elements, etc.