

# VILLAGE BRIDGE AD HOC COMMITTEE

## FINAL REPORT

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

- Andrew Cadorette, Chair
- Paula Bedard, Vice Chair
- Tina Lawton, Scribe
- Collis Adams, Select Board Representative
- Dick Bruno, Economic Development Council Representative
- David Nieman, Conservation Commission Representative
- Rick Wilhelmi, Parks and Recreations Commission Representative
- Cynthia Boisvert, Goffstown Rotary Club Representative
- David Pierce, Friends of the Goffstown Rail Trail Representative

### ABOUT THE VILLAGE BRIDGE AD HOC COMMITTEE (2022-2024)

The mission of the Village Bridge Ad Hoc Committee is to follow through on the Next Steps detailed in the [Final Report](#) of the [Village Piscataquog River Pedestrian Bridge Ad Hoc Committee \(2020-2021\)](#), presented to the Goffstown Select Board in 2021 for constructing a pedestrian bridge across the river in the location of the old railroad bridge that was destroyed by fire in 1976.

As stated in the Charter of the Village Bridge Ad Hoc Committee (2022-2024), the Committee's evaluation shall result in a report detailing funding sources for a pedestrian bridge and establishment of an independent 501(c) 3 non-profit for accepting community donations for the bridge. The report should focus on funding sources, with primary focus on sources other than local property taxes. For reference see the [Village Bridge Ad Hoc Committee \(2022-2024\) Charter](#).

### The Village Bridge Ad Hoc Committee Meetings

The Village Bridge Ad Hoc Committee (Committee) met a total of 11 times during the charter period (03/28/22 – 05/01/24). Committee meetings were held on the first Tuesday of each month at the Parks and Recreation Center, 115 South Mast Road, Goffstown at 6:30pm.

### Volunteer Hours

It is estimated that Committee members **spent a total of 163 hours during the charter period.** Hours spent are based on the number of meetings held; attendances; hours per meeting; and other activities members participated in on behalf of the Ad Hoc Committee.

### Community Events

The Committee hosted a community awareness booth at the Goffstown Pumpkin Regatta on Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup> 2023. Two Committee members staffed a outreach booth for the day and handed out a Village Bridge marketing sheet (Attachment A). Community feedback about the pedestrian bridge in the villages was positive.

### Other Considerations

- **Piscataquog River Dam(s).** In April 2023 the State of New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) notified the Town of Goffstown on issues related to the two dams in Goffstown and one in Manchester along the Piscataquog River.

NHDES is recommending one of the dams, the Hadley Falls dam, to be removed. The Hadley Falls dam creates the impound upon which the village pedestrian bridge would traverse.

While the outcome of the Hadley Falls dam is unknown, the Committee strongly recommends pursuing a pedestrian bridge over the Piscataquog River in the Village for the following reasons:

- Completion of the rail trail into the Village; and
- Possible opportunities for cost savings, funding or collaboration with DES.

For current information about the status of the Piscataquog River Dams, see [Town of Goffstown website](#).

- **Transportation Alternative**

Given the number of recent multi-family housing developments along the rail trail corridor alternative transportation corridors are an asset to the community. Completion of the pedestrian bridge is essential to connecting communities and to bring residents and commerce to the village center.

## COMMITTEE DELIVERABLES

The Committee's charter established the following deliverables:

1. The Committee's evaluation shall result in a report on shall result in a report detailing funding sources for a pedestrian bridge; and
2. Establishment of an independent 501(c)3 non-profit for accepting community donations for the bridge.

The report should focus on funding sources, with primary focus on sources other than local property taxes.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on Committee's evaluation of funding sources for a pedestrian bridge in the village of Goffstown, the Committee recommends the following:

1. **The Town should apply for a [NHDOT Transportation Alternative Program Grant \(TAP\)](#)** as the primary funding source for construction of the pedestrian bridge.
  - This 80%-20% grant is the most likely source of funding for the project.
  - Funding will support design, land acquisition, construction, and engineering oversight.
  - Next window of opportunity to apply for the TAP Grant – Fall 2024.
  - Recommend tasking DPW to draft the application.
  - Anticipate a total project expense of \$1.25 million (design, land, construction).
  - Anticipate possible timeline:
    - Fall 2024 TAP Grant application.
    - June 2025 TAP Grant approved.
    - March 2026 Town Article to raise the 20% (If applicable).
    - June 2026 Solicit design bids.
    - Sep 2026 Award design contract.
    - Dec 2026 Execute the prearranged (2023) land purchase agreement.
    - Jan 2027 Solicit construction bids.
    - Mar 2027 Award construction contract.
    - June 2028 Project completed and final payment.

Note, if a 2025 TAP grant is awarded, funds must be committed within 5 years.

Other grant opportunities may also exist, and the Committee recommends the Town continue to investigate them. Other possible funding opportunities:

- RAISE Grants – RAISE grants are awarded on a competitive basis, per statute, for planning or constructing surface transportation infrastructure projects that improve safety; environmental sustainability; quality of life; mobility and community connectivity; economic competitiveness and opportunity including tourism; state of good repair; partnership and collaboration; and innovation (See: <https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants>).
- Private Foundations and donations.

## 2. Establishment of a 501(c)(3) non-profit

The Committee recommends not establishing an independent 501 (c)3 for the accepting community donations for the construction of the pedestrian bridge.

Instead, the Committee recommends immediately establishing an MOU with **Friends of the Goffstown Rail Trail** (existing 501(c) 3) to be a fiscal agent to accept donations restricted for the pedestrian bridge.

Pros/cons

- The alternative (setting up a new 501(c)(3) just for bridge construction) will be administratively difficult to sustain a Board of Directors and Officers.
- The current FGRT Bylaws allows the Select Board to appoint a voting member to the Board of Directors.
- Will allow the Town to promote donations for the project.
- The transfer of funds from the 501(c)(3) to the town will simply be unanticipated funds to offset some portion of contract commitments.

## 3. Other Recommendations

- Extend the Charter of the Village Bridge Ad HOC Committee for an additional two (2) years. This will allow the Committee to:
  1. Continue to support the Town's TAP grant application.
  2. Allow the Committee to collaborate with and support the Friends of the Goffstown Rail Trail in outreach and soliciting of donations for the construction of the pedestrian bridge; and
  3. Allow the Committee to continue working with the Town to seek other grant funding opportunities.
- Add a representative from the Goffstown Department of Works to the Committee's Charter. If the town chooses to apply for the TAP grant in the Fall of 2024, the Committee would be better able to support the Town if there is DPW representation on the Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Cadorette, Chair

05/01/2024

Date

## Goffstown Village Bridge Carrying Goffstown Rail Trail over the Piscataquog River

### Background

- In 2022, the Select Board formed a committee to study the possibility of building a pedestrian bridge at the site of the old railroad bridge over the Piscataquog River in the Village.
- The Town acquired the small privately owned parcel along the north shore of the river.
- The town now owns the abutments on both sides of the river.
- In the future, if the Town decides to move forward with this project, owning both abutments will help in securing grants and expediting construction.

### Bridge Benefits

The community could realize the following benefits from a bridge:

- Integrates the Goffstown Rail Trail with the village.
- Provides scenic views of river and wildlife
- Establishes new village focal point
- Improves cyclist and pedestrian safety
- Creates a more walkable community
- Provides opportunities for local business
- Promotes a healthy lifestyle
- Improves connection to the New Boston Rail Trail
- Consistent with Goffstown Master Plan



### Funding, Cost and Timeline

It is anticipated that the primary source for funding would be the NH DOT Transportation Enhancement Grant. The preliminary estimate for similar structures in other towns is \$1,250,000. The 80% grant would cover \$1,000,000 of the bridge cost, including design, construction, and related engineering services. The 20% grant match (\$250,000) would need to be raised by the town through other funding sources and private donations.

### Design Details

If funding is awarded, options for the 126-foot-long bridge designs would consider materials, community needs and architectural style.

For more information visit  
[www.GoffstownNH.gov](http://www.GoffstownNH.gov)

