

**Gaston County
Township Investment Grant Applications**

South Point Township

Project	Requested Amount	Recommended Approval
South Point High School (BOE)	\$ 99,400	\$ 90,000
Belmont Rail Trail	\$ 250,000	\$ 125,000
Poston Park Sidewalk Connector		
*Jason Williams Co-Sponsor (Revised Project Amount)	\$ 152,000	\$ 76,000
South Point GEMS Substation	\$ 120,000	\$ 66,500
Belmont Library	\$ 55,000	\$ 55,000
Cramer Mountain Road Sidewalk	\$ 175,000	\$ 87,500
Total:	\$ 851,400	\$ 500,000

**Gaston County Commissioners—Township Grant Application
December 2015**

Project/Program Name: South Point High School

Sponsoring Commissioner: Commissioner Mickey Price

Applicant Organization/Contact Person: Gaston County Board of Education;
Superintendent Jeff Booker 704-866-6111

Township Name: South Point

Amount Requested: \$99,400

Program/Project Description and Estimated Duration: (please see attachment)

Evaluation Matrix

Criteria	Weight	Score
1. Impact: Percentage of the population of the township or county as a whole served by the program and the significance of the benefit received.	1 - 5	5
2. Sustainability: The extent to which the program or capital improvement can be sustained without additional county financial support.	1 - 5	5
3. Match/Leverage: Other resources are available to fund a portion of the project. (Outside support of 50% or more results in a maximum score of 5 for this criterion.)	1 – 5	3
4. Job Creation/Economic Development: The program or improvement results in or fosters job creation and/or economic development.	1 – 5	3
5. Education: Significant gains in primary, secondary or high education are associated with the program or project.	1 – 5	5
6. Quality of Life/Health/Safety: The project or program yields significant benefits in one or more of these areas for Gaston County residents.	1 – 5	5
Total	6 - 30	26

Program/Project Narrative

The South Point Township includes 11 schools with a student population of over 7,500. This Township Request centers on needs at South Point High School. First, the auditorium at South Point is a center for performing groups at the school, feeder schools and the general community. This facility is in critical need of audio and lighting equipment. The benefits of replacing the sound and lighting equipment touches the quality of life and safety of citizens who participate in and who are in the audience of the various events that happen in this auditorium. Community and school events would definitely be enhanced through the funding of this Request. This portion of the Request totals \$59,400 (audio/sound \$36,000, lighting \$23,400).

In addition, the main driveway and parking lots at South Point are in need of repair. The drive and parking areas are used extensively by many citizens as well as twice daily by citizens picking up or dropping off students. Repairs to the drive and parking areas will greatly enhance safety and access to the many activities that occur at South Point High. This portion of the Request totals \$40,000.

The cost of this Township Request is \$99,400.

Gaston County Township Grant Application

Project Name: Belmont Rail Trail

Sponsoring Commissioner: Mickey Price

Applicant Organization: City of Belmont

Applicant Contact Information and Contact Person:

City of Belmont
Attention: Adrian Miller
PO Box 431
Belmont, NC 28012
704-825-5586
amiller@cityofbelmont.org

Township Name: South Point Township

Amount Requested: \$250,000.00

Project Description: The Belmont Rail Trail is a 1 mile long greenway connecting downtown Belmont with Belmont Abbey College. It will be built within the NCDOT Rail corridor, beside the Belmont Spur of the Piedmont and Northern Railroad tracks.

Estimated Duration of the Project: The project, once built, will be permanent.

Project Narrative:

The City of Belmont has been working to build an asphalt greenway within the Belmont Spur of the Piedmont and Northern Railroad (P&N) rail corridor between downtown Belmont and Belmont Abbey College since 2009. A map of the corridor is found on page three of this application.

This greenway is known as the Belmont Rail Trail, and it is a major effort to better connect the town with the college. The city council and the college administration have made increasing the connection between the two communities a priority. This trail will make a physical connection between the two communities, which will result in one community being able to more easily visit the other.

The NCDOT Rail Division controls the P&N Rail corridor and is supportive of the City's efforts. The City has also been working with the various property owners along this corridor to ensure that the design of the greenway will not disrupt the property owners' enjoyment of their property. These owners include the Southern Benedictine Society, the Sisters of Mercy, commercial developments, and residents of Belmont.

The City of Belmont anticipates that the design and engineering of the Belmont Rail Trail will be completed by the fall of 2016. Construction should begin in 2017 and should take one year. The City of Belmont has received \$1.1 million in state funding for the trail construction. CaroMont Health has also committed \$100,000 in funding to the project. The City of Belmont will cover the remainder of the project cost. The cost estimate for the trail construction is \$1.7 million, and the City is requesting this grant to help cover its portion of the project.

This rail trail will improve the quality of life for Gaston County residents by allowing a safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle connection from Belmont Abbey College and the North Belmont area to downtown Belmont. This trail is a part of the Carolina Thread Trail and will ultimately connect to Mount Holly on the east side of the Belmont Abbey campus and to Cramerton to the south.

The Belmont Rail Trail will also promote a positive image of Gaston County as drivers on Interstate 85 will see college students on bicycles, young parents pushing strollers, and runners crossing the interstate on the existing railroad bridge at Exit 26. The first impression that visitors to Gaston County will see is people being active on the greenway as they exit the interstate onto Belmont-Mount Holly Road at Exit 26. Prospective business owners and developers meeting with the Gaston County EDC staff will see these runners, walkers, cyclists, and students on the greenway in front of the Gaston County Visitors Center and EDC offices.

The Belmont community is a very active community. Runners, walkers, and cyclists are on sidewalks and streets from before sunrise until well after sunset. This active lifestyle is attracting new residents to the area, and the Belmont Rail Trail will be another amenity attracting them to eastern Gaston County. Employers want a healthy workforce, so Belmont and Gaston County must continue building communities where physical activity is an easy and convenient part of life.

The Belmont Rail Trail will be a welcome addition to Belmont and eastern Gaston County. It will allow students at Belmont Abbey to walk or ride a bicycle to work in downtown shops and will allow residents of Belmont to walk to a play or basketball game at the Abbey. It will showcase Gaston County has an active place to live and work. The City is excited to add Gaston County as a partner on this project and looks forward to beginning construction on the Rail Trail in early 2017.

Figure 1. The Belmont Rail Trail corridor runs north-south from Belmont Abbey College to Downtown Belmont. It will be located within the NCDOT Rail Right-of-Way.

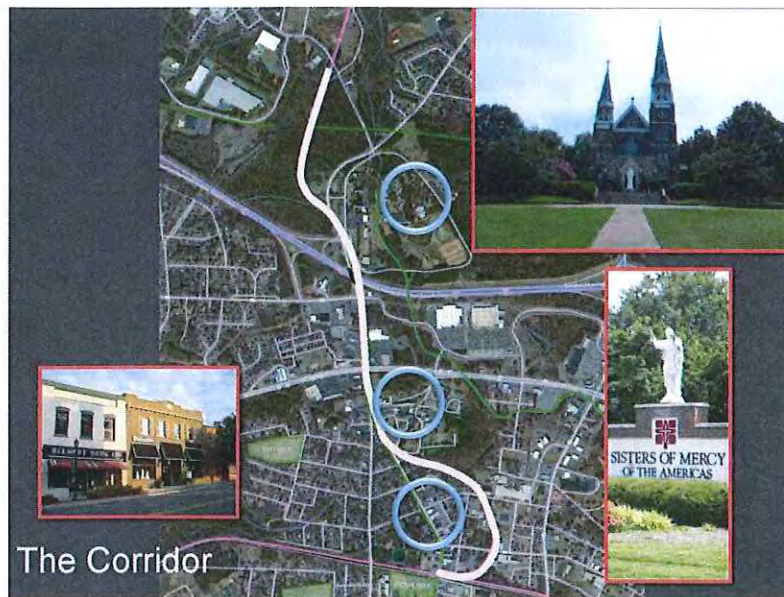


Figure 2. The Belmont Rail Trail is represented below at it crosses the Sisters of Mercy campus near Downtown Belmont.

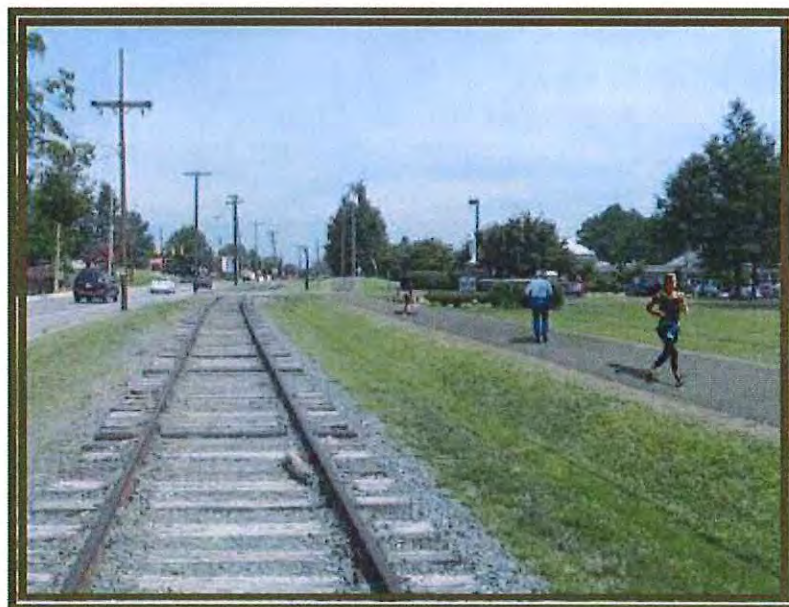


Illustration of trail on east side of rail

City of Lowell

Application for Gaston County Township Grant

Poston Park Sidewalk Connector

December 2015

1. Project Name: Poston Park Sidewalk Connector
2. Sponsoring Commissioner: Mickey Price and Jason Williams
3. Applicant Information:
 - A. Organization City of Lowell
 - B. Contact Information Address: City of Lowell
101 West First Street
Lowell, NC 20898
Phone: (704) 824-3518
 - C. Contact Person: Al Greene, City Manager
4. Township Name Gaston North and South Point
5. Amount Requested \$152,000
6. Project Description

This project would extend sidewalk northward along Spencer Mountain Road from the terminus of the existing sidewalk at the Lowell City Limits to the entrance of Poston Park. This sidewalk interconnection will provide significant local and county-wide benefit by improving pedestrian access between Poston Park and the City of Lowell. The extension will also provide continuous pedestrian access from Post Park to the Carolina Thread Trail on the South Fork of the Catawba River.

Currently pedestrian access is extremely limited by the lack of connectivity. Spencer Mountain Road is a busy route with poor visibility and no pedestrian amenities. While it is a very short distance from the population center in Lowell to Poston Park, the lack of sidewalk for the short distance between the City Limits and the entrance to Poston Park discourages pedestrians, including school-aged children, from visiting the park. Lowell has a large population of walkers and runners who would enjoy including Poston Park on their route if access could be improved.

The City of Lowell undertook the extension of sidewalk within Town up to the northern City Limits at a cost of \$238,000. This was done with encouragement and support of county officials and with the commitment from the County that funding would be pursued by the County to connect the sidewalk through the small section of unincorporated area to the entrance to Poston Park. The County has displayed genuine interest in causing this interconnection, however to date a funding source has not been identified and the interconnection has not been made.

The extension would involve the construction of approximately 300 linear feet of curb and gutter and sidewalk with associated storm drainage, to provide a transition to County-owned property. Once the project transitions off of NCDOT right-of-way and onto County property, it will continue for approximately 1,000 more feet without the NCDOT required curb and gutter with drainage. The remaining 1,000 foot section will require clearing and grubbing and the installation of sidewalk. The engineering firm of Robinson and Sawyer has estimated that the total cost to construct 300 feet of the project to NCDOT standards, and the remainder to county specifications only, in today's dollars, would be approximately \$152,000. This construction estimate includes a 10% contingency.

Attached is a copy of the revised estimate prepared by Mr. Don Smith with Robinson and Sawyer. We have also included an aerial depiction of the location of the proposed sidewalk. The City of Lowell would welcome funding for this project. It appears that the project could be actually administered by either the County or the City, and Lowell would be comfortable with either approach.



ROBINSON & SAWYER, INC.



CIVIL ENGINEERING CONSULTING AND DESIGN

EST. 1962

707 E. SECOND AVE. ■ GASTONIA, NORTH CAROLINA 28054 ■ PHONE: 704-864-2201 ■ FAX: 704-864-2276

Preliminary Engineers Estimate of Construction Costs

Proposed Sidewalk from Poston Park to Preston Place Subd. along Lowell Spencer Mtn. Rd.
(300+ feet within R/W of Lowell Spencer Mtn. Rd., remainder on County, Poston Park Property)

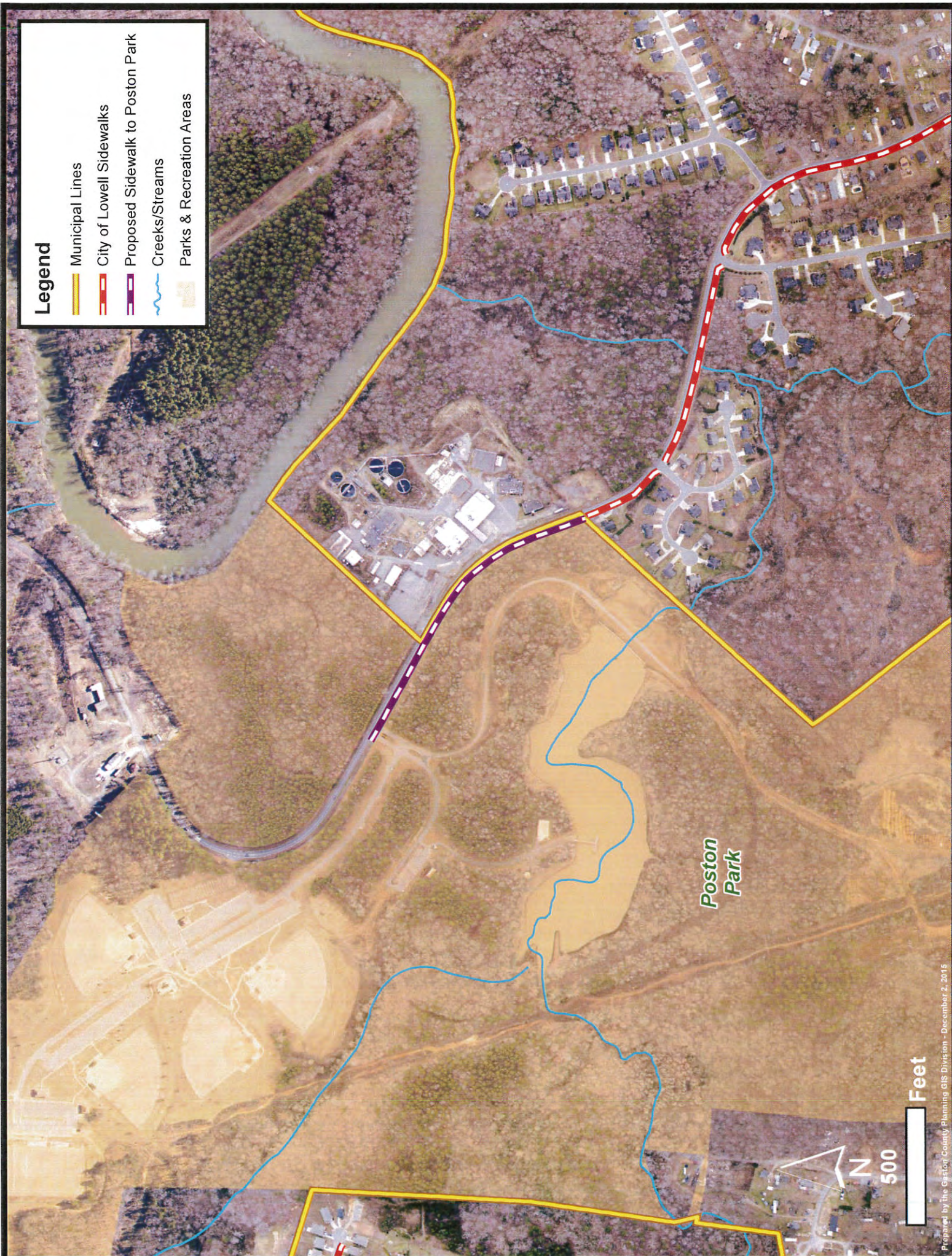
For Town of Lowell

1/5/2016

Item	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price	Cost
Mobilization	LS	1	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
Clearing & Grubbing	AC	0.5	\$10,000.00	\$5,000.00
Seeding & Mulching	AC	0.5	\$3,000.00	\$1,500.00
Temporary Silt Fence	LF	1,400	\$3.00	\$4,200.00
Temporary Check Dams	EA	36	\$300.00	\$10,800.00
Excavation	CY	350	\$18.00	\$6,300.00
24" Concrete Curb & Gutter	LF	300	\$30.00	\$9,000.00
I-19.0B Asphalt Base Course	TNS	15	\$125.00	\$1,875.00
S-9.5B Asphalt Surface Course	TNS	7	\$125.00	\$875.00
Concrete Sidewalk	SY	715	\$60.00	\$42,900.00
Incidental Stone	TNS	70	\$50.00	\$3,500.00
Storm Drainage Pipe	LF	30	\$30.00	\$900.00
Storm Drainage Structure	EA	1	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Flared End Section	EA	1	\$800.00	\$800.00
Signage/Landscaping	LS	1	\$3,600.00	\$3,600.00
Fencing/Protective Barriers/Trash Cans	LS	1	\$7,200.00	\$7,200.00
Traffic Control	LS	1	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Engineering/Surveying/Administration	LS	1	\$18,100.00	\$18,100.00
			Sub-Total	\$138,550.00
			10%± Cont.	\$13,855.00
			2015 Dollars TOTAL	\$152,000
(Inflation at 5% per year for 6 years)			2021 Dollars TOTAL	\$204,000

Note(s):

1) Cost estimate does not include removal of rock or unsuitable subgrade soil



Legend

- Municipal Lines
- City of Lowell Sidewalks
- Proposed Sidewalk to Poston Park
- Creeks/Streams
- Parks & Recreation Areas

Poston
Park

500 Feet



GASTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS **TOWNSHIP GRANT APPLICATION**

Date: December 21, 2015

Project Name: South Point GEMS Substation – Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance Improvements

Commissioner: Mickey Price

Applicant: Gaston County Government

Contact: Ray Maxwell, PE
(704)862-7551
Ray.Maxwell@gastongov.com

Township: South Point

Amount Requested: \$120,000

Project Description: Upgrade building, parking area, and sidewalks to comply with Federal ADA requirements.

Estimated Duration: Twelve (12) months to design/construct

Background: The South Point GEMS Substation is located at 700 Eagle Road in Cramerton. The substation allows faster response times to emergency calls in the southeastern portions of the County. The building was originally constructed in 1987 and consists of 5,280 square feet. The entrance drive is constructed of gravel and there is no paved parking or compliant handicap spaces. The building is not accessible to individuals with disabilities and the existing restrooms are not ADA compliant.

The proposed project consists of exterior paving and sidewalk work along with striping and signage to meet compliance requirements. In addition, the interior of the facility will be renovated to comply with Federal ADA requirements.

Improvements proposed as a result of this grant request will benefit citizens in the southeastern portion of the County. The project will be sustainable in that, once permanently installed, the improvements will be routinely maintained as part of the County's ongoing maintenance efforts. Temporary design and construction employment

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opportunities will be created as a result of the proposed project. GEMS substations provide locations to stage paramedics in certain areas of the County so that they can more quickly respond to emergency needs and reduce response times. This is critical to life safety for certain health or accident conditions. GEMS substations greatly contribute to quality of life, health, and safety within the County.



GASTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

TOWNSHIP GRANT APPLICATION

Date: December 30, 2015

Project Name: Belmont Library – Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance Improvements

Commissioner: Mickey Price

Applicant: Gaston County Government

Contact: Ray Maxwell, PE
(704)862-7551
Ray.Maxwell@gastongov.com

Township: South Point

Amount Requested: \$55,000

Project Description: Improve ramp and parking area and upgrade restrooms to comply with Federal ADA requirements.

Estimated Duration: Nine (9) months to design/construct

Background: The Belmont Branch Library is located at 125 N. Central Avenue in Belmont and provides library access to citizens in the southeastern portion of the County. The building was originally constructed in 1961 and consists of 5,135 square feet. Due to physical site constraints, parking is limited to the rear of the property, with a one-way entrance and exit configuration. A small parking area is located to the left of the entrance near N. Central Avenue. However, parking in this area is not located on County land. Because of this, the handicap entrance is positioned at the rear of the building. The current parking, ramp, and restroom facility does not comply with Federal ADA requirements.

The proposed project consists of demolishing and re-building the existing handicap ramp to comply with Federal ADA requirements. The ramp is too steep in its current configuration. In addition, handicap parking spaces will need to be re-configured, re-stripped, and proper signage installed. The staff restroom is too small and does not

(continued...)

comply with accessibility requirements. The fixtures from the existing staff restroom will be removed and the room converted to a janitorial closet. At that point, everyone would be required to use the public restrooms. This is the most cost-effective approach to compliance.

Improvements proposed as a result of this grant request will benefit citizens in the southeastern portion of the County. The project will be sustainable in that, once permanently installed, the improvements will be routinely maintained as part of the County's ongoing maintenance efforts. Temporary design and construction employment opportunities will be created as a result of the proposed project.

During FY 2014-2015, there were 39,827 citizen visitors to the Belmont Branch, including 8,672 attendees at Library programs for all ages. Due to the importance of libraries for primary, secondary and higher education, as well as providing a location for resource access to achieve life-long learning, this project contributes to educational benefits. Libraries also contribute greatly to quality of life, health, and safety - and serve as community focal points for child and family learning, cultural enhancement, and economic assistance for citizens seeking employment and benefits. The nature of the Public Library is to be open and accessible to all, therefore improving access for patrons with disabilities or mobile limitations is crucial.

Gaston County Township Grant: Town of Cramerton, NC

Project/Program Name: Cramer Mountain Road Sidewalk

Sponsoring Commissioner: Commissioner Mickey Price

Applicant Organization: Town of Cramerton, NC

Contact Person: David Pugh, Town Manager

Contact Information:

Phone: 704-824-4337

Email: dpugh@cramerton.org

Address: 155 N. Main Street
Cramerton, NC 28032

Tax ID #: 56-0891982

Township Name: South Point Township

Amount Requested: \$175,000



Program/Project Description:

The Cramer Mountain Road Sidewalk project is a capital project with funding participation by multiple entities (Town of Cramerton and NCDOT). The project includes the completion of sidewalk from Baltimore Drive to S. New Hope Road and, overall, will help link Wilkinson Blvd. to S. New Hope Rd. via sidewalk, completing this part of Cramerton's Pedestrian Master Plan.

Specifically, the project consists of 3,000 LF (0.56 miles) of sidewalk with curb and gutter along Cramer Mountain Road from Baltimore Drive to S. New Hope Road. The project will complete the much needed connection between the existing sidewalk networks in downtown Cramerton to S. New Hope Road. *Note: The project map is included as an attachment with this narrative.*

Estimated Duration of the Project or Program: July 2016 - August 2017

Township Grant Evaluation Criteria of Cramer Mountain Road Sidewalk

1. Impact

The Cramer Mountain Road Sidewalk Project provide an important link from new developments (i.e. Villages at Cramerton Mills and Stuart's Landing) along Cramer Mountain Road, Cramer Mountain Community, Carillon Assisted Living Center, Cramerton Middle School, Downtown Cramerton, Goat Island Park, and other future office/retail development on Cramer Mountain Road. Specifically, the Villages at Cramerton Mills at final, proposed build-out is expected to have 284 new multi-family units; 395 single family units; 105,000 square ft. of Office/Retail and 15,000 square ft. of Institutional property. This is a significant future population growth for Cramerton, and this sidewalk project will assist in continuing to keep neighborhoods linked via pedestrian transportation options. As shown by the included map, this section of sidewalk will truly help Cramerton be a safe walkable and bikeable community.

Under existing conditions, Cramer Mountain Road is extremely curvy and unsafe for pedestrian travel. The installation of curb and gutter on the "mountain side" of Cramer Mountain Road would make the road safer to travel by improving storm water drainage and also provide more definition to the roadway travel area.

Township Population Impact: According to 2010 Census Data, the South Point Township total population is 40,484. Cramerton has a population between 4,250 and 4,750, which will, in some way, be positively impacted by this project. Furthermore, the sidewalk will provide congestion relief to the Cramerton Middle School area, serving the population of the school (approximately 850+) and those involved in transporting the school children (i.e. parents and family members).

Given these factors, the project could directly impact 25% or more of the population in the South Point Township. Additional factors could increase this percentage even higher when taking into account those traveling on S. New Hope Road being impacted by middle school traffic congestion relief and the economic development opportunities at the Villages at Cramerton Mills.

2. Sustainability

The Cramer Mountain Road Sidewalk project *will not* require any additional financial support from Gaston County. Cramer Mountain Road is currently a state road and maintenance will be assumed by NCDOT.

3. Match/ Leverage

The following budget and funding information for Cramer Mountain Road Sidewalk is as follows:

Cramer Mountain Rd. Sidewalk Budget

<u>Budget Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Construction w/ 15% contingency	\$693,400
Engineering	\$104,000
Construction Inspections	\$75,000
Total	\$872,400

Cramer Mountain Rd. Sidewalk Funding Sources

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>	<u>% of Project</u>
Town of Cramerton	\$257,400	29.50%
NCDOT	\$440,000	50.44%
Gaston County	\$175,000	20.06%
Total	\$872,400	100.00%

“Outside support” (Cramerton & NCDOT) is nearly 80%. The \$175,000 amount Cramerton is requesting from the Township Grant Initiative is approximately 20% of the project budget. Any Township Grant funding received will be put towards the construction cost of the project.

4. Job Creation/ Economic Development

The Cramer Mountain Road Sidewalk project will create/maintain jobs based on the various engineering, survey, and construction agencies used in the project. Local agencies in these fields will have an opportunity to bid and be awarded the job based on the qualification criteria.

Furthermore, continued completion of Cramerton’s Pedestrian Master Plan helps improve Cramerton and Gaston County quality of life, a significant element in economic development perception and project pursuit. Attracting businesses to the proposed 105,000 square ft. of Office/Retail and 15,000 square ft. of Institutional property at the Villages at Cramerton Mills will

be bolstered by the construction of the Cramerton Mt. Rd. Sidewalk as a significant pedestrian linkage to other desirable locations in Cramerton.

5. Education

The Cramer Mountain Road Sidewalk project will connect Cramerton Middle School to several neighborhoods and areas with students who attend the middle school. Examples include Cramer Mountain Community, Riverside, Cramerton Downtown/ Town Center, and the Hampton Meadows Apartments. The future Villages at Cramerton Mills will also be linked by this sidewalk.

The project will provide congestion relief and is intended to educate the public and community decision makers on how to improve air quality and make institutional change to reduce pollution. The project funding from NCDOT is allocated from Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program. The CMAQ program was implemented to support surface transportation projects and other related efforts that contribute to air quality improvements.

The area will include signage along the route that will explain air pollution reduction achieved by active transportation versus driving for short trips.

6. Quality of Life/ Health/ Safety

Cramer Mountain Road is extremely curvy and is not safe for pedestrian travel without the installation of a sidewalk. This project will significantly contribute to pedestrian safety, while offering a new transportation mode.

As discussed in the Match/Leverage section, the NCDOT recognized this as a strong project and is partnering financially with Cramerton because the project will:

- Provide traffic congestion relief and traffic flow improvement.
- The project is part of a bicycle and pedestrian facility program.
- It will provide an opportunity for public education and outreach regarding non-vehicular modes of transportation options within the Cramerton community.

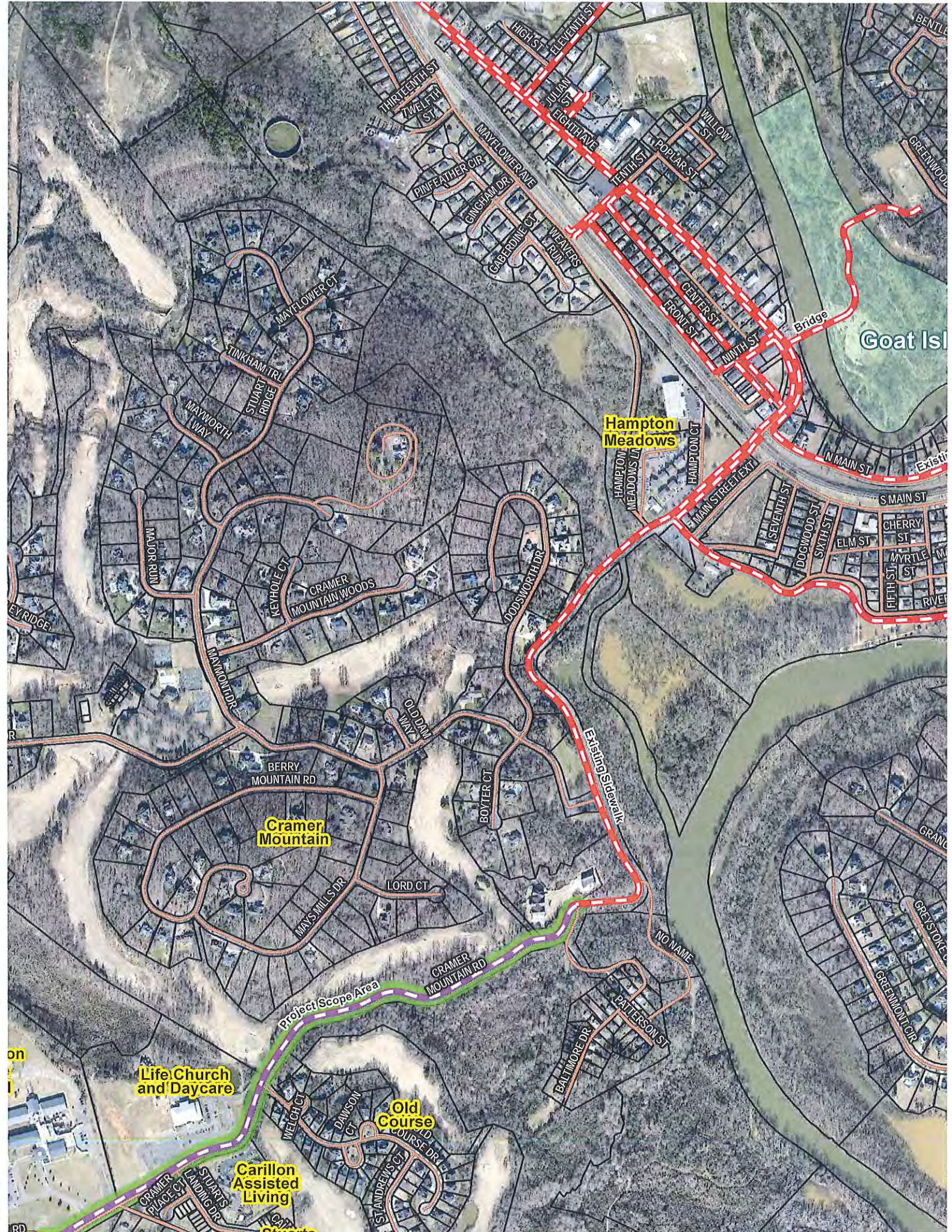
Based on calculations this project will remove 1000kg of pollutants (NOX plus 25% of PM 2.5) from the air over 20 years.

The project will address the safety of pedestrians walking to the S. New Hope Rd. area. Specifically, children walking to Cramerton Middle School will have a sidewalk in an area where pedestrians must currently walk in the roadway. The project will also reduce the amount of vehicular traffic delivering children to the school and picking them up at days end. It will allow citizens to walk to destination areas including the Cramerton Town Center and Market St. shopping areas and Goat Island Park.

In closing, given all of the factors described above, the Town of Cramerton believes this is a worthwhile project that serves a clear, identifiable public purposes.

Attachments:

1. Cramer Mountain Road Sidewalk project area map
2. Gaston-Cleveland-Lincoln MPO letter of support
3. NCDOT Division 12 letter of support – forthcoming



GASTON-CLEVELAND-LINCOLN
Metropolitan Planning Organization

Transportation Planning

Mailing Address:
PO Box 1748
Gastonia, North Carolina 28053

Physical Address:
150 South York Street
Gastonia, North Carolina 28052

Tel: (704) 866.6837
Fax: (704) 869.1960

www.gclmpo.org

December 30, 2015

Mickey Price, Commissioner
Gaston County Board of Commissioners
128 West Main Ave
Gastonia, NC 28053

Re: Letter of Support

Dear Commissioner Price,

The Gaston-Cleveland-Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization (GCLMPO) is happy to support the Town of Cramerton's efforts to obtain funding for the Cramer Mountain Sidewalk Project.

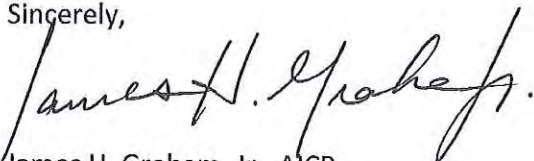
The Town has already been successful in procuring NCDOT Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds through the MPO for this project. Funding received through Gaston County will leverage these CMAQ funds and allow the Town to complete this important pedestrian improvement project in its entirety.

The sidewalk project, which is a priority identified in the 2009 Cramerton Pedestrian Plan will create pedestrian continuity between downtown and the fast growing area near Cramer Mountain and New Hope Road. It also represents a safety enhancement at the Cramer Middle School. Currently, no sidewalk exists to allow safe passage for students and families to walk to the School.

The GCLMPO and Cramerton have formed a strong and successful partnership in developing needed transportation enhancements. The Cramer Mountain Sidewalk is yet another example that demonstrates the Town's commitment to improving quality of life for its residents by ensuring that bicycling and walking are made a safe and convenient choice.

We hope you will look upon the Town's request with favorable consideration. Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



James H. Graham, Jr., AICP
Principal Transportation Planner
GCLMPO