

# Milton Design Workshop for Economic Development

## A Vision for the Future Development of Exits 17 & 18 on the Spaulding Turnpike

October 4, 2013

Sponsored By:  
The Economic Development Committee  
Milton, New Hampshire

Conducted By:  
Mettee Planning Consultants  
Dover, New Hampshire



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# 1. Acknowledgments

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The following individuals were instrumental in making the Milton Economic Development Design Workshop successful.

## **The Mettee Planning Team**

Jack Mettee, AICP  
Mettee Planning Consultants

Shannon Alther, AIA  
TMS Architects

Douglas Greiner, ASLA  
G2+1 LLC

Dana Lynch, PE  
Civilworks, Inc.

## **The Milton Advisory Team**

Gerald Coogan, AICP  
Milton Town Planner

### **Economic Development Committee**

Robbie Parsons, Chairman

Nick Marique, Milton Fire Chief

Bob Bordeau, Business Owner

Leo Lessard, Resident, County Commissioner

Don Dunton, Commercial Real Estate Broker

### **Other Key Workshop Participants**

Steve Ireland, PE, NH DOT

Denise Roy Palmer, Director, Wentworth Economic  
Development Corporation

Michael Bergeron, NH DRED

Robert Frizell, Citizen/Key Landowner

Mary Perkins, Citizen/Key Landowner

David Paey, Citizen/Key Landowner

## 2. Creating An Opportunity for Economic Development

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### *Current Economic Climate—Need for More Employment, Higher Wages, Greater Community Valuation*

Milton and its surrounding communities have seen substantial economic change in the past ten years. During the early 2000's, an economic boom resulted in significant jobs and housing growth, increased commercial building and increased individual buying power. By 2008-10, the NH Seacoast, including Milton, experienced a serious economic downturn that saw the downsizing of businesses, a slowdown in housing construction and sales, and a high unemployment rate. More recently, the Seacoast area has experienced a mild economic recovery as demonstrated through rising employment and wages.

These changes have affected the economy Milton in terms of population growth, employment and income. Although the unemployment rate crept up from a low in 2001 of 3.9% to 7.4% in 2011, for Milton, it was still higher than Strafford County, which was lower than 6%. Milton's median family income of \$59,560 in 2010 lagged behind the average for Strafford County, which was over \$70,000. Milton's total community valuation expanded by less than 1% from 2005 to 2010.

### *Milton Taking Action to Stimulate Economic Activity*

While there are a number of thriving businesses and a small industrial park, Milton could benefit from expanded economic development that is consistent with its small town character. To address this situation and encourage greater economic development, Milton has undertaken a number of initiatives in the past several years.



- Developed an industrial park off Route 125 (White Mountain Highway) in North Milton. At present, there are a half dozen businesses and a day care center in the park, but it is now built out.
- Established a dedicated economic development page on Milton's town website.
- Established an Economic Development Committee.
- Applied for and received two grants from Public Service of New Hampshire. The first grant was for the development of a *Strategic Economic Development Plan* ( SEDP) that was completed in 2012. The second was to undertake a design workshop to focus on the future business development around the two exits off the Spaulding Turnpike— Exits 17 & 18.
- Received financial support from Federal Savings Bank to conduct the design workshop.
- Established an ongoing dialog with the state Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED) as well as prospective landowners in the vicinity of Exits 17 and 18 who may be interested in developing their property or selling their property to a developer



### 3. Economic Development Consistent with Town Plans

**This project is consistent with 2004 Milton's Master Plan.**

#### *The Vision Chapter*

- Encourage well-planned industrial and commercial growth in appropriate locations of Milton while maintaining the rural character of the community and protecting natural resources.

#### *The Economic Development Chapter recommends:*

- Identify areas for commercial nodes along major routes through town.

**The project is also consistent with the 2012 Strategic Economic Development Plan**

As part of the Strategic Economic Development Plan (SEDP), the town sponsored a public forum to conduct a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis as part of the grant program. This analysis came up with similar results to the NROC

project in 2007. In summary the forum identified several key strengths:

- Two exits on Spaulding Turnpike, each with adjacent developable land
- Good municipal services—fire, police, libraries, water and sewer services near Exit 17.

And several weaknesses:

- Lack of curb cuts on NH Routes 75 at Exit 17 and 125 at Exit 18
- Minimal land/zoning for industry-existing industrial park full

This recommended the following:

- Undertake a full evaluation of the land areas adjacent to Interchanges 17 and 18 of the Spaulding Turnpike for business development. Assess the feasibility of development based on ease of access, environmental impact and development capability.

## 4. The Design Workshop Process

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In an effort to meet the vision, goals and recommendations of the SEDP, the Economic Development Committee decided to hold a one-day design workshop to develop a “conceptual blueprint” for how the areas around Exits 17 and 18 might be developed. This workshop would bring together a variety of design professionals—architects, landscape architects, civil engineers and planners—to craft a graphic vision for what the areas around the two exits could look like in 20-30 years. This graphic vision would complement the written vision of the Master Plan and Strategic Economic Development Plan.

### **Pre-workshop activities included outreach to landholders and site visits**

Prior to the design workshop, there was an effort to engage the various landowners in the project area to determine their level of interest in order to determine what these citizens would like to see in

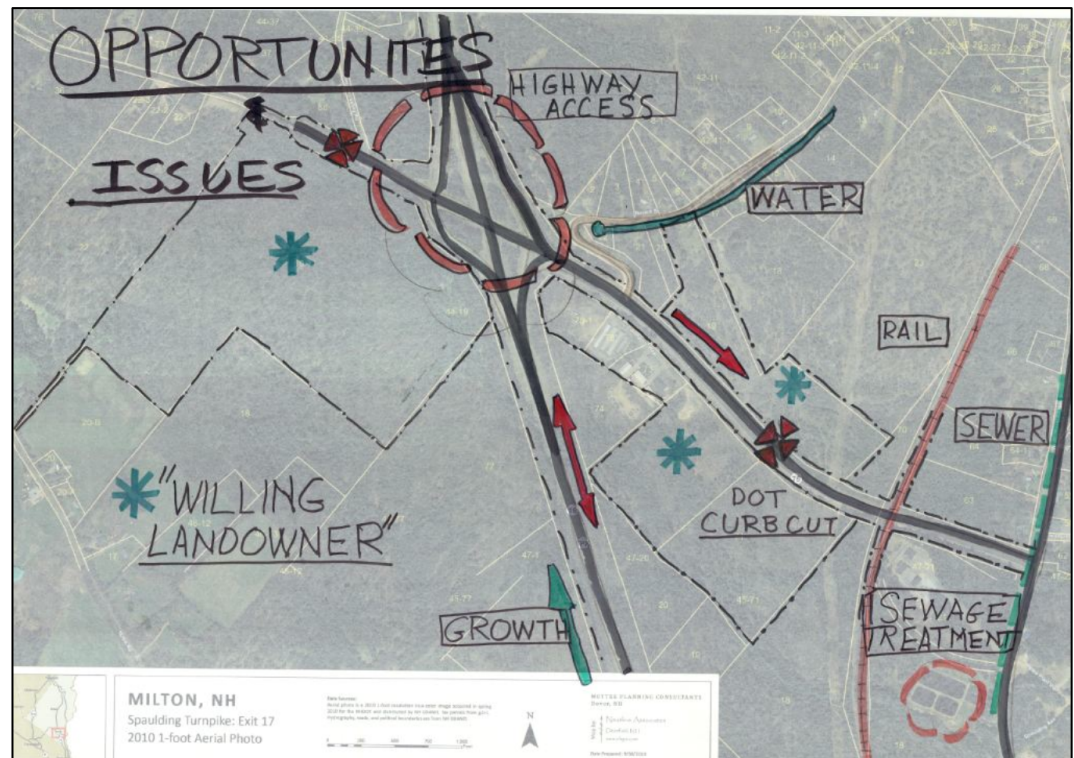
the exit areas in the future. Various community stakeholders were also interviewed.

Based on these meetings and interviews, a number of issues and opportunities became apparent that might affect any future development of these exit areas. A picture of what could be envisioned for future economic development also began to emerge.



## Exit 17—Issues & Opportunities

- ❖ Excellent highway access to Spaulding Turnpike—a major arterial.
- ❖ Growth of southern Strafford County is moving north, e.g., development of Safron in Rochester will create jobs and encourage spin-off businesses.
- ❖ Water and sewer services nearby, including sewer treatment plant on White Mountain Highway, but would need to be extended.
- ❖ Rail nearby, but would need to create access and siding.
- ❖ Willing landowners with several large parcels.
- ❖ Generally compatible zoning for business activities.
- ❖ Letter from NH DOT to allow a curb cut on Route 75 to access adjacent land subject to approval from DOT with respect to future design of such a curb cut.





## Exit 18—Issues & Opportunities

- ❖ Excellent highway access to Spaulding Turnpike—a major arterial.
- ❖ Several willing landowners.
- ❖ Railroad siding with existing, working crossing on Pigott Road.
- ❖ Additional crossing permit on property of major landowner.
- ❖ Train pulls 5-10 cars per once southerly and once northerly direction.
- ❖ Three phase power to site.
- ❖ Lack of municipal water and sewer.
- ❖ NH DOT controls ROW (no curb cuts) adjacent to exit.
- ❖ Site access for motor vehicles should be improved.
- ❖ Large wooded parcel lends itself to forest product industry, i.e., wood pellets



## The Design Workshop—converting citizen ideas into a graphic v

On Friday October 4, 2013 several citizens and landowners as well as representatives from local agencies met with the design team at the Milton Town Hall for the design workshop. The design professionals were from the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, civil engineering and community planning. Representatives from NH DOT, NH DRED, and the Wentworth Economic Development Corporation (WEDCO) also provided valuable and timely input.



The design team and the citizens discussed possible options for the future of Exits 17 and 18.

The design team then gathered to discuss how to best capture the themes and ideas from the listening session in a graphic format. Each team member took on a specific design element representing one of the key themes such as

creating mixed use business and residential area near Exit 17 and more intensive industrial business development around Exit 18 and the expansion of water and sewer utilities for the properties adjacent to Exit 17.

Conceptual plans, renderings and project recommendations were then prepared by each of the designers. These plans were presented to the adjacent landowners and citizens of Milton late in the afternoon.



Section 4 that follows summarizes the vision and recommendations resulting from the design workshop.



## 5. Design Workshop Recommendations

### Exit 17 East—mixed use of business and residential

#### Strategies

- ❖ Develop mixed-use area north of Route 75 with retail commercial & professional office.
- ❖ Develop mixed-use area south of Route 75 that includes mixed housing to accommodate future workforce.
- ❖ Extend water and sewer to Route 75 development sites.
- ❖ Develop curb cut along Route 75 to allow access to properties north and south of roadway.



## Exit 17 Perspective Looking East on Route 75

- ❖ A perspective concept of future development on Route 75 east of Exit 17.
- ❖ Mix of retail and business uses—professional and business offices.
- ❖ Potential curb cut/intersection on NH Route 75 with water and sewer sleeves under roadway to connect area to extended municipal utilities.





## *Exit 17 –Potential Water-Sewer Extension to NH Route 75*

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### Issues

- ❖ Development in this area will be enhanced by extension of water/sewer systems.
- ❖ Water & sewer systems experience capacity constraints.
- ❖ Confirm extent of Milton Water District jurisdiction.

### Strategies

- ❖ Extend sewer from White Mountain Highway west to existing intersection with Elm Street.
- ❖ Will require pipe over RR bridge on Route 75.
- ❖ Install sleeve under Route 75 where proposed highway curb cut occurs. Install gravity sewer to accommodate development north of Route 75.
- ❖ Extend water service from Elm Street along north side of Route 75 to potential curb cut.
- ❖ Install sleeve for water service under Route 75 to service development on south side of road.
- ❖ Milton Water District & Town should enter into discussions about system expansion & possible funding. Include NH DES in these discussions.
- ❖ Town should undertake further preliminary engineering to refine design details and costs (e.g., RR crossings; plant upgrades). See preliminary costs next page.



## ***Exit 17 –Potential Sewer System Extension to NH Route 75— Preliminary Cost Estimates***

Preliminary budget estimates for system sewer extension, exclusive of any existing system requirements, indicate:

❖ **Sewer system would cost approximately \$620,000**

### **Preliminary Engineering Cost Estimate--Sewer System Expansion**

#### **Assumptions**

Maximum available capacity --20,000 gallons per day (gpd)\*

Use 8" SPR 35, PVC pipe

Average depth - 6 feet

Sewer manholes (SMH) at 300 foot intervals

Total length =3,800 linear feet (LF)

Assume 10% of length requires 3 feet of ledge removal

Item	Description	Units	Unit Cost	Total
1	8" PVC, SDR 35	3,880	\$60/LF	\$228,000
2	Pipe bridge at RR crossing	1 LS (Lump Sum)	\$150,000/EA	\$150,000
4	Horizontal bore at Route 125 & Route 75 locations with 18" sleeve	200 LF	\$300/LF	\$60,000
6	Ledge Removal	1 LS	\$10,000	\$10,000
			Sub-Total	<b>\$448,000</b>
		20% Contingency		\$89,600
				<b>\$537,600</b>
		15 % Engineering/Testing		\$80,640
			<b>Final Total</b>	<b>\$618,240</b>

\*Notes:

a. Assume approx. 45 acres to be served will require maximum allowable of 20,000 gpd or 500 gallons per acre.

b. Existing --60,000 gpd existing plus 20,000 gpd added through new development = 80,000 gpd. Thus, 88% capacity of 90,000 gpd

## ***Exit 17 –Potential Water System Extension to NH Route 75—Preliminary Cost Estimates***

Preliminary budget estimates for water system extension, exclusive of any existing system requirements, indicate:

❖ **Water system would cost approximately \$350,000**

### **Preliminary Engineering Cost Estimate--Water System Expansion**

#### **Assumptions**

Maximum available capacity --20,000 gallons per day (gpd)

For design parameters, assume adequate system capacity

For new pipe, use 8 " diameter (interior); CI 52 with 5 foot minimum cover

Assume hydrants at 500 ' ± intervals and at site entrances

Assume 10% of length requires 3 feet of ledge removal

Total length = 2550 linear feet (LF)

Item	Description	Units	Unit Cost	Total
1	8" DI; CI 52 including earth trench backfill & bedding	2550 LF	\$60/LF	\$153,000
2	Hydrants including 6' top gate valve	7 EA	\$4,000/EA	\$28,000
3	Tap & gate valve of existing main	1 EA	3,000 EA	\$3,000
4	Horizontal bore at Route 75 locations	200 LF	\$300/LF	\$60,000
5	Horizontal bore at tap	2 EA	\$5,000 EA	\$10,000
6	Ledge Removal	1 LS	\$10,000	\$10,000
			Sub-Total	<b>\$264,000</b>
		20% Contingency		\$52,800
				<b>\$316,800</b>
		15 % Engineering/Testing		47,520
			<b>Final Total</b>	<b>\$364,320</b>



## Exit 17 West—mixed use of business and single family residential

### Issue

- ❖ Site has steep grades from Farmington Road frontage to the west.

### Strategies

- ❖ Opportunity for business and office on front half of parcel.
- ❖ Single-family clusters on back half of parcel.
- ❖ Signature bridge element at entrance from Farmington Road.
- ❖ Potential access at rear of property.





## Exit 18 West—wood product processing: industrial and warehousing

### Strategies

- ❖ Implement new access/RR crossing off White Mountain Highway (NH Route 125).
- ❖ Develop industrial processing center at front of lot adjacent to RR. Possible location for wood product industry such as wood pellet manufacturing.
- ❖ Create RR siding to ship processed product or receive raw materials.
- ❖ Create additional large-scale business/industrial activity adjacent to RR.
- ❖ On southern portion of property, develop flexible business/ industrial/warehouse pods.
- ❖ Create trail system that can interconnect with nearby conserved lands.



## Exit 18 East—commercial retail/business office activity

### Strategies

- ❖ With NH DOT policy of no curb cuts near Exit 18 on White Mountain Highway, place curb cut further south to gain access to main parcel and adjacent parcels.
- ❖ Take advantage of visibility from, and adjacency to, Spaulding Turnpike. Develop larger parcel into business mixed-use area of commercial retail and professional offices—small restaurants, gas station, grocery/convenience store.
- ❖ Maintain current residential uses along White Mountain Highway. If/when owners wish to sell or develop properties, consider redeveloping into commercial retail use through interconnections with activities developed on the larger parcel.



## 6. Next Steps

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- ❖ Place October 4, 2013 Milton Design Workshop for Economic Development on town website.
- ❖ Present Design Workshop findings to local boards and organizations.
- ❖ Maintain contact with “willing” landowners about developing/redeveloping their properties. Determine extent of commitment from landowners, e.g., agreement to allow Milton Economic Development Committee market the property or willing to sign letter of intent to sell.
- ❖ Continue dialog with NH DRED, WEDCO and PSNH about potential developers using the design workshop images to help “sell” the development potential of properties adjacent to Exits 17 and 18.
- ❖ Contact the Commercial Industrial Board of Realtors (CIBOR) and work with CIBOR realtors and market properties to them.
- ❖ Contact PSNH to request additional assistance for marketing
- ❖ Milton Water District & Town should enter into discussions about system expansion & possible funding. Include NH DES in these discussions.
- ❖ Town should undertake further preliminary engineering to refine design details and costs (e.g., RR crossings; plant upgrades).
- ❖ Review current zoning in these area to determine if proposed uses are consistent with existing permitted uses.
- ❖ Consider specific funding to engage an economic development specialist on a part-time basis to help implement recommendations of the Design Workshop of October 4, 2013 and the *Strategic Economic Development Plan* completed in 2012.
- ❖ Explore NH state sponsored programs to encourage economic development such as Tax Increment Finance Districts (TIFs) or Economic Revitalization Zones. See Appendix A for a description of these programs.

# Appendix A. Economic Development Programs

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## ***TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF) DISTRICT:***

This program allows the city/town to finance infrastructure improvements through bonds that are paid back from the dedicated new taxes that the improvements support. Once the bond is paid back, the taxes then become part of the general revenue fund. For more specifics and examples, see: <http://www.nh.gov/oep/resourcelibrary/referencelibrary/t/taxincrementfinancing/index.htm>.

## ***ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION ZONES:***

This program allows a community to designate a geographic area(s) within its boundaries to attract business development. Businesses that meet certain qualifications, such as creating new jobs, improving facilities, and purchasing equipment may qualify for a credit against their state business taxes. For further information, see: <http://www.nheconomy.com/business-services/business-assistance-programs/incentive-programs.aspx>.

## ***COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS:***

Administered by the N.H. Community Development Finance Authority, this program allocates federal funds for approved projects that meet certain guidelines. One of the most significant aspects of these projects is that each must promise to create a certain number of jobs to people from low- to moderate-income households. Communities typically participate in the application process along with the regional economic development corporation. For further specifics, see: [http://www.nhcdfa.org/web/cdbg/cdbg\\_grants.html#Economic%20Development%20anchor](http://www.nhcdfa.org/web/cdbg/cdbg_grants.html#Economic%20Development%20anchor).

## ***RURAL DEVELOPMENT:***

The federal US Department of Agriculture sponsors many programs to support rural areas by funds targeted to improving their infrastructure, businesses, and resource availability. For assistance for “Rural business and cooperative programs”, see: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/vt/vtbuscoop.htm>. For the information about the “Community facilities program”, see: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/vt/vtnhcf.htm>.

## ***COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION TAX RELIEF INCENTIVE-79E PROGRAM:***

This program allows communities to grant property tax relief for projects/renovations that improve designated areas of their downtown or town center. See: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/NHTOC/NHTOC-V-79-E.htm>.

## ***COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENT PROGRAM:***

This program accepts applications for community projects to receive NH tax credits which are then sold to raise money to fund the projects. Tax credits are sold to businesses which use seventy-five percent of the value of the credit purchase price to offset their business taxes. Federal business tax deductions may further increase the value of the tax credits. See: [http://www.nhcdfa.org/web/cdip/cdip\\_overview.html](http://www.nhcdfa.org/web/cdip/cdip_overview.html).