

# HEAL NH ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

## CASE STUDIES

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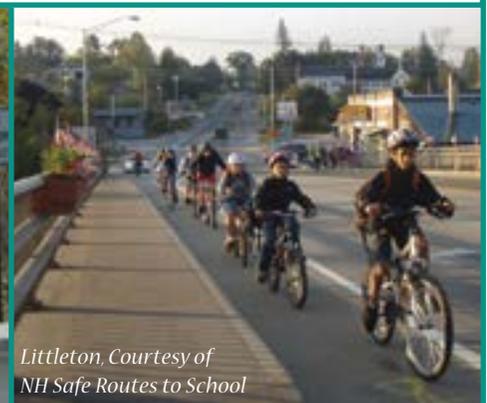


*Chestnut Street Bicycle  
Lane Pilot, Manchester*

A program to help New Hampshire  
communities become more  
bicycle and pedestrian friendly



*Heritage Rail Trail, Nashua*



*Littleton, Courtesy of  
NH Safe Routes to School*

### Healthy Eating Active Living NH

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HEAL NH is led by the Foundation for Healthy Communities and supported by a collaboration of foundations and state agencies committed to promoting health and quality of life for all New Hampshire residents. Funding is provided by HNH Foundation, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation, Endowment for Health, NH Charitable Foundation, and NH Department of Health and Human Services.

## HEAL ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

In December 2013, Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) NH launched its Active Transportation Program. The program is designed to make it easier for New Hampshire residents to be physically active through walking, bicycling, and other active transportation modes.

The Active Transportation Program has contributed to increased community investments in walking and biking infrastructure through grants made possible through an anonymous fund of the NH Charitable Foundation. In 2014, the first round of funding attracted 59 applicants each applying for up to \$25,000; the total sum of requests was more than \$1.03 million. Awards were made to six applicants including the Town of Belmont (Lake Winnisquam Scenic Trail); Nashua YMCA (Heritage Rail Trail); Town of Littleton (Ammonoosuc Rail Trail); City of Lebanon (Mascoma River Greenway); Central New Hampshire Bicycling Coalition (City of Concord bike lanes and signage); and the City of Manchester (Connect Manchester Master Plan).

The grants through the HEAL Active Transportation Program helped communities leverage \$1.3 million in additional funds to support safe transportation for all, no matter how they choose to travel.

HEAL held a second round of mini-grants in 2014. Fourteen applied for up to \$5,000 and the total sum of requests was close to \$61,000. Awards were made to four applicants including Nashua YMCA (Heritage Rail Trail); Goodwill Industries of Northern New England (Recycled Cycles program); Friends of the Salem Bicycle Pedestrian Corridor; and the Town of Warner (Warner Rail Trail).

The \$120,000 in grants from the HEAL Active Transportation Program helped communities leverage \$1.3 million in additional funds to expand efforts to support more safe options for biking and walking. In total, the HEAL Active Transportation Program has supported or educated people from 70 New Hampshire communities, or 30% of the state.

There is a compelling need and interest from communities for continued funding support and technical assistance for active transportation projects. In the two grant rounds, there have been 55 unique applicants, which represent 24% of the state's communities. These applicants requested more than \$1.64 million in projects, all of which were worthy of funding.

The HEAL Active Transportation Program is a key strategy of HEAL's Healthy People Healthy Places Plan, a five-year guide to address the burden of chronic disease by creating healthier environments, particularly in New Hampshire's high-need communities. The Active Transportation Program will continue its work to coordinate education and advocacy efforts for community design that supports biking, walking, and other active transportation options on both the state and local levels. HEAL will also work to help secure funding and other resources for bike and pedestrian infrastructure in New Hampshire communities, placing a priority on highest-need communities and neighborhoods.

### ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

1. Active Transportation training series
2. Professional development opportunities including presenting to NH Planners Association about Complete Streets and co-organizing the NH Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Committee (BPTAC) Biannual Conference and Work Session
3. Technical assistance for Complete Streets policies
4. Health equity criteria included in NHDOT Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
5. NHDOT practices and projects to advance active transportation
6. Established equity criteria in USDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Assessment
7. NHDOT performance measures introduced to include bike-ped safety
8. Development of *Advocates Guide to Promoting Bicycling and Walking Accommodations* with BPTAC
9. Partnership with Plymouth State University to establish bicycle-pedestrian counting program and baseline activity report
10. Collaboration with regional planning commissions on advancing active transportation planning in their work programs and project evaluations
11. Partnership with Transport NH and Bike-Walk Alliance of NH to advance active transportation

“When it comes to economic development, there's a lot an area can do to enhance its prospects, up to and including marketing and branding, business recruitment programs, and improving the local permitting process. Often overlooked, however, is improving the “walkability” of an area whose economic development prospects you'd like to enhance. Data show that things like wide, pedestrian-friendly sidewalks, enhanced crosswalks, abundant street trees and shading, added lighting, slower traffic speeds, and public art will attract people who are more apt to spend more money at nearby stores and restaurants.”

– Will Stewart

Current President of the Greater Derry Londonderry Chamber of Commerce & Former Executive at the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce

**CONCORD –  
COMPLETE STREETS POLICY**  
Safety & Equitable Access

Concord adopted a Complete Streets policy in 2009 called the Comprehensive Transportation Policy. Spurred by this policy and national Bicycling Friendly Communities designation by the League of American Bicyclists, significant planning and design began to support streets and sidewalks that were not only safer for bicyclists and pedestrians, but also more attractive to visitors to downtown businesses. Adoption of the Complete Streets policy has served as a catalyst for funding and partnerships that support more choices for safe, multi-modal transportation in the city. Concord has excelled at making incremental improvements since adopting their policy, and that work paid off in 2012 when the city received a \$4.71 million federal TIGER grant for the revitalization of its Main Street.



Artist rendering of Main Street in Concord after completion of the Downtown Complete Streets Improvement Project.

Other investments have followed. For example, in an effort to support Concord's Complete Streets efforts and enhance bicycle rider mobility and safety throughout the city, the Central NH Bicycling Coalition elected to donate \$10,000 from the HEAL Active Transportation grant along with \$7,000 of their own monies to the city. The focus of the six-phase project was to mark the bike lane through the Route 3 North corridor in conjunction with a roadway improvement project and to install 12 "Wrong Way Ride With Traffic" signs throughout the city.

The HEAL Active Transportation Program grant has been combined with the \$2.7 million Phase 6 Corridor Improvement Project. Together, the two projects will enhance the bicycling and walking experience from Concord and Penacook with marked bike lanes, signs, sidewalks, bicycle, and pedestrian friendly signals.

A close partner with the City of Concord is Goodwill Industries of Northern New England which received a \$5,000 Active Transportation Program grant to support their growing Recycled Cycles program. The program is based out of Concord and trains female inmates to repair bicycles. With increased access to safe bicycle lanes in Concord, Recycled Cycles is working to meet the demand for affordable bicycles to low- and middle-income people in the Greater Concord area, repairing and reselling over 1,000 bikes last year. They have estimated the amount of funding leveraged in cash and in-kind services as a result of this project is currently \$24,000.

**SALEM – FRIENDS OF SALEM  
BIKE-PED CORRIDOR**  
Leveraging funding

Friends of the Salem Bike-Ped Corridor received \$5,000 from the Active Transportation grant program to support Phase I of their project to develop a 1.1-mile section connecting to the paved Windham Rail Trail. This corridor would serve as an alternative bike-ped commuting route to congested NH Route 28. Additionally, the trail would serve several communities to provide safe access to work, education, healthcare, and area businesses.

The entire project is expected to cost \$917,642, requiring a 25% TE match of \$229,410. The \$5,000 HEAL Active Transportation grant, along with \$10,000 from the Arlington Pond Protective Association, helped leverage \$125,000 in NH Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA) tax credits which provided a net of \$100,000 toward the match.



“ I wish to thank HEAL-NH for the \$5,000 Active Transportation grant awarded to our organization. This grant from a respected statewide organization like HEAL was a key factor in our \$125,000 CDEFA tax credit award to support our work.”

David S. Topham, Co-Chair & Treasurer  
Friends of Salem Bike-Ped Corridor

## ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION CASE STUDIES

### MANCHESTER COMPLETE STREETS Leveraging Partnerships

The City of Manchester received a \$5,000 Active Transportation grant to assist with the preparation of the Connect Manchester Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan. Data was collected and used to identify areas of opportunity for bike-ped improvements. In addition to developing an inventory of priority projects, a goal was to save money by incorporating bike-ped improvements early in the process when the cost is minimal.

Manchester's Complete Streets approach led to a partnership with Bike Manchester, a nonprofit advocacy group that recently formed to help facilitate several bike-ped improvements and policy changes. For instance, Bike Manchester, working with the Manchester Environmental Protection Division of the Department of Public Works (DPW), helped facilitate two pilot bike lane projects. Bike Manchester and the city have also teamed up to install locally-designed and constructed bike racks in various downtown locations. The racks will be funded through the Manchester 50/50 Bike Rack Program which allowed businesses and non-profits to apply to share the cost of having a \$400 bike rack permanently installed on or near their property.

During the past year, this project has changed the city's internal operations: a Complete Streets approach is now considered across departments. For instance, striping crews are now asking for a "bike lane review" prior to repainting lines on a freshly paved street, and engineers are considering the applicability of bike lanes and sidewalks during unrelated projects such as sewer construction.

The city demonstrated its widespread support for a Complete Streets way of thinking when it voted to accept the year-long 'Mayor's Challenge for Safer People & Safer Streets' in May 2015. While this Complete Streets philosophy is not yet an official policy, the DPW is partnering with the Southern NH Planning Commission to develop a comprehensive Complete Streets toolbox to be integrated into their master plan which is expected to be completed in September 2015 and presented to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.



New bicycle lane on Chestnut Street in Manchester.

### LITTLETON – RAIL TRAIL Economic Development

The \$25,000 provided to Littleton's rail-to-trail project through the HEAL Active Transportation Program is being used for the federal railroad right of way abandonment permitting process and the removal of ties and rails from 3.5-5 miles of the railroad corridor. Once this phase is complete, Littleton will build a trail that will serve to provide safe walking and biking paths to the downtown. This project is seen as supporting the town's efforts for economic development and tourism, and aligned with their River District revitalization project.

Littleton is leveraging the Active Transportation funds with a \$30,000 grant from NH Department of Resources and Economic Development Bureau of Trails (NHDRED). In February 2015, the formal rail line abandonment process commenced and the town is planning to begin construction on the rail trail in Fall 2015.



A small town of about 6,000, Littleton has done great things! It has been recognized nationally for being a walkable and economically vibrant community.

Littleton has a long history of successfully planning and implementing active transportation improvements to support a 'livable and walkable' downtown and boost economic vitality and tourism and has received statewide and national recognition for its efforts. The town received a 98% score by Dan Burden, a leading expert on walkable communities. In 2003, it received the national 'Great American Main Street Award' and was commended by a Boston Globe travel writer: "The heart of Littleton is a walkable Main Street, which features handsome edifices, eclectic eateries, and plentiful shopping." Littleton also accomplished lowering its retail vacancy rate from 20% in 1992 to just 2% in 2011.

Learn more about the HEAL Active Transportation Program: [www.HealNH.org](http://www.HealNH.org)