

## GROWING THE ECONOMY

# Revitalizing County Economic Centers

# Completion of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail



- **WHAT:** The Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) is a historic treasure extending across some of Northern Vermont's most beautiful landscapes. The 93-mile Trail spans the breadth of Northern Vermont from the Connecticut River to within two miles of Lake Champlain. The LVRT is a four-season, multi-purpose recreation and transportation corridor. After two decades of research, planning and construction, 33 miles are now open. This investment will complete the construction of the remaining 60 miles.
- **WHY:** A healthy outdoor recreation economy directly supports related businesses and organizations. It also contributes to numerous other aspects of the Vermont economy and culture, including the encouragement of healthy communities and individuals, enhancement of the Vermont lifestyle and the Vermont brand, increased connection to nature and the attraction of high-quality employers and sustainable workforce in all economic sectors. The open 33 miles have already become an economic engine for the 18 towns and villages on its route. Lamoille County describes the LVRT as a win-win, with the creation of new businesses and enhancing the bottom line of existing ones. The Town of Danville sees the LVRT as a critical tool in connecting its community assets such as Joe's Pond, Danville Village and local businesses.
- **WHO:** The economy in Vermont benefits from our shared love and use of the outdoors. Direct spending at outdoor retailers and service providers as well as per trip expenditures adds up to \$2.5 billion annually in consumer spending. By expanding and promoting our recreational infrastructure assets and businesses, we will be able to sustainably support this sector and help drive the overall growth of Vermont's economy. The 60 miles of additional trail will run through the towns of Walden, Hardwick, Wolcott, Morristown, Cambridge, Fletcher, Bakersfield, Fairfield, Sheldon, Highgate and Swanton.

The following is a resolution presented to the Town of Highgate Select Board for town meeting:

- Shall the Town make the following statement of support:
  - We, the citizens of Highgate, strongly support the completion of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail. We urge the Governor and the Legislature to jointly develop a plan that will ensure the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail is completed by 2025.
- **HOW:** The 60-mile project will be divided into smaller sub projects. Approximately 4 miles from Highgate to Swanton, 19.5 miles from Greensboro Bend to Morristown, 18.5 miles from Cambridge to Sheldon Junction, 11 miles from Danville to Greensboro Bend and approximately 6 miles from Sheldon Junction to Highgate. This project will be managed through the Agency of Transportation.
- **FUNDING:** Total cost will be \$14,150,000. The state's 20% share will be \$2,830,000 with the \$11,320,000 balance coming from federal transportation funds. A request for the state's share of funds will be included in the Governor's FY21 Capital Budget Adjustment Request.