

Northern Community Investment Corporation Organizational Background

March 2022

Founded in 1975, Northern Community Investment Corporation (NCIC) is a vibrant 501(c)3 organization with the mission to strengthen businesses, communities, and employment opportunities throughout the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont and the North Country of New Hampshire. NCIC helps businesses, municipalities, and nonprofits develop solutions to meet their specific needs. For nonprofits and municipalities, NCIC helps design, develop, fundraise, and oversee community and economic development projects that are favorable to the needs of the regions' businesses and communities. For business, NCIC stimulates employers with capital, expertise and tailored innovative solutions for growth. This includes our direct lending, participation lending, grant writing, and our Small Business Cost Share Program that helps to offset costs for small businesses to hire professional consultants to assist in areas such as feasibility, planning, marketing, financial management, permitting assistance, designs, and more.

Each year our eight-member team operates a significant multi-million internal budget, while also writing and/or managing additional funding awarded to entities outside of our organization. NCIC staff are familiar with federal, state and local grant programs and the various rules and regulations that are tied to the various funding sources.

We are a team driven by results. We are able to implement and administer high quality projects because of our skilled and experienced staff which is comprised of an extremely talented team with a wide range of community and economic development talents. Each brings a unique skillset to NCIC and has strong abilities to realize success, not only for our organization, but for our local business and communities as well.

Below are samples of our achievements in regard to municipal and nonprofit efforts.

In Littleton, NH, we continue to write and/or manage grants for the River District, Industrial Park and various Town departments. This includes the following awards;

- Economic Development Administration: \$1,018,800 water and sewer construction (River District)
- Eversource: \$5,000 Opera House lighting
- Land and Water Conservation Fund: \$200,000 Riverfront Commons
- Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund: \$20,000 Opera House lighting
- NH Department of Environmental Services Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund: \$2,340,000 water and sewer (Sub Area 2)
- Northern Border Regional Commission: \$110,000 trail development; \$200,000 Riverfront Commons; and \$119,500 Littleton Industrial Development Corporation
- Recreational Trails Program: \$55,000 trail development
- Transportation Alternatives Program: \$800,000 sidewalks improvements

- US Department of Agriculture, Rural Development- \$30,000 Engineering for water and sewer (Sub Area 5); \$17,000 Police Utility Vehicle; \$31,900 Fire Department doors and Public Works generator; \$15,900 Public Library climate control
- NH Community Development Finance Authority - \$12,000 for Cultural Arts feasibility study with \$5,000 in matching funds from NCIC's USDA Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training grant; \$575,000 Tax Credits for Riverfront Commons
- Utilizing a \$900,000 bond for match funds for the various grants

We are continuously active with the town in achieving solutions. NCIC's support in Littleton has helped the Town increase community and economic development, poised the Town for business growth and retention, increased the quality of life, and aided Littleton in becoming a destination for visitors.

In Lancaster, NH, we have written and managed, on behalf of the town and Weeks Medical Center, grants totaling nearly \$800,000. Projects include distance learning and telehealth, wood-based heating systems and downtown greenway and parking improvements. NCIC assisted the Town in securing a \$155,500 Tax Credit award to upgrade Colonel Town Recreation.

In St Johnsbury, VT, we have written and managed grants on behalf of the chamber of commerce and St J Development Fund that have totaled approximately \$600,000. Projects include staffing, professional services and building improvements.

In Lyndonville, VT, we have written and managed, on behalf of Northern Vermont University and the community, grants that total approximately \$400,000. Projects include a co-working space, WiFi for the downtown, business technical assistance funding, and a telecommunications study.

In Newport, VT, we are working closely with the city to write grants and manage more than \$1 million in funds which were secured over a one year period. We are working with the town to revitalize their downtown and surrounding business community. Projects include safety gear for the fire department, playground infrastructure, outdoor recreation, street improvements, and other infrastructure.

In Berlin, NH we have provided grant writing assistance and project management services for the development of the Androscoggin Food Cooperative. Grants secured and/or managed by NCIC have totaled \$65,000.

In Groveton, NH, we wrote and managed grants for the design and then the construction of water and sewer for the industrial park created at the former mill site. We wrote grants for more than \$1 million for this purpose. Once the infrastructure was in place we were able to attract the largest metal fabrication, machining, and powder coating operation of its kind in New England to the site. Today, NSA employs more than 100 individuals at their Groveton facility.

These are but a small sampling of the projects NCIC staff have been involved with throughout the years. The professional economic development services which NCIC provides these

communities is evident in the successes that we obtain and demonstrates that we are an accomplished and capable entity ready to steer communities throughout our region forward.

The NCIC team responsible for assisting businesses, towns, and nonprofits in grant writing and project management includes:

Peter Corey, President

A native of Littleton, New Hampshire, Peter Corey served thirty-four years in the US Army before retiring as a Brigadier General in 2015. Mr. Corey served as the Director, Joint Staff of the New Hampshire National Guard, and was responsible for the supervision and management of the Joint Staff with special emphasis on Homeland Defense/Homeland Security, the State Partnership Program, and Service Member and Family Services. Mr. Corey also served as the Adjutant General's primary staff officer for all matters related to Domestic Support Operations and coordinated with State and Federal agencies accordingly.

Mr. Corey holds dual Master's in Economic Development from Southern NH University and Strategic Studies from the US Army War College along with a bachelor's degree in Plant Science from the University of NH.

His passion for the well-being of the region had him on the board of selectman in Whitefield, NH from 2016-2022, as well as Whitefield's Planning Board. He also served on the board of directors of Affordable Housing, Education, and Development (AHEAD), in Littleton, NH from 2015-2021 where he held positions as the board vice-president and chairman of the Governance Committee.

Katelyn Robinson, Director of Economic Development

Ms. Robinson graduated from the University of Vermont in 2011 with a degree in Community and International Development. Prior to graduation, she worked in the banking industry as a teller. Later, Ms. Robinson worked as a Project Development Finance Consultant providing grant writing and management services to nonprofits and municipalities before she joined NCIC in 2013. She has since secured and managed numerous grants from a variety of funding sources for municipalities, nonprofits, and businesses throughout the region.

Most notably, Katelyn oversaw the management of a joint USDA/EDA \$1.4 million Farm and Forest Jobs Accelerator project which was a partnership among five nonprofit entities. The partnership led to the creation of 6 new businesses; the retention of 673 jobs and creation of 94 new jobs (within 241 businesses); and leveraged over \$7.6 million in investments within the farm and food sector.

Ms. Robinson is experienced with numerous local, state and federal grant resources.

Mike Welch, Senior Project Manager

Mike Welch provides technical expertise and support to communities, partners and businesses that are implementing improvements and strengthening employment opportunities.

Mr. Welch brings over 25 years of experience as a municipal government manager in Maine and Vermont. In his 10 year+ tenure at NCIC, Mr. Welch has managed feasibility studies, project implementation and grant management assistance for businesses, communities and non-profit organizations. Mr. Welch is the primary project manager for the ongoing projects in Littleton.

Mr. Welch is dedicated to the community and this region. He is on the board of St Johnsbury First Night, a cooperator of the Northeastern Regional Hospital, on the advisory board of MA Housing Investment Corporation for NMTC's and on the Board of Directors for HOPE (Helping Other People Every Day).

Karen E. Geraghty, Project Manager

After a career of research and teaching in academia, Ms. Geraghty returned to live on the Canadian border of the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont where she grew up. There she has applied her academic knowledge and skills to community and economic development initiatives, first at University of Vermont Extension where she served as Project Coordinator for housing, community facilities, and business development projects. She then joined Northeastern Vermont Development Association, the regional planning commission and economic development corporation for the Northeast Kingdom. As NVDA's Economic Development Specialist she worked closely with State and Federal agencies to bring funding and technical assistance to support business recruitment and expansion and develop municipal projects across the region.

Ms. Geraghty holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Chicago and a Master's degree from the University of Tennessee. She has served on several Boards of Directors in Northern Vermont which has given her the opportunity to work closely with local leaders on community and regional issues.

United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Community Development Initiative Overview

March 2022

- **Application Deadline:** April 19, 2022 for grants.gov submission, or April 25, 2022 for hard-copy submission
- **Max Request Amount:** \$250,000
- **Match Requirement:** 1 to 1 (for every \$1 of RCDI grant funds, \$1 in non-federal match must be provided)
- **Proposed Length of Award:** 3 years
- **Purpose:** Grants will be made to qualified intermediary organizations (NCIC) that will provide financial and technical assistance to recipients (Town of Whitefield and/or Town of Littleton) to develop their capacity and ability to undertake projects related to housing, community facilities, or community and economic development that will support the community.
- **Assistance to be provided by NCIC to the Town(s):** Project development assistance, accessing alternative funding sources (grant writing), effective fundraising techniques (leveraging funds), and project management (if or when appropriate).
- **Cost to the Town:**
 - Phase One - Grant Writing and Submission = \$3,125
 - Can be federal or non-federal funds
 - NCIC anticipates the application will cost our team approximately \$6,250 to complete. NCIC requests the Town to cover half of this expense with remaining costs covered by Town of Littleton
 - Phase Two – Match Funds for RCDI = \$10,000 to \$120,000
 - Must be non-federal funds
 - Town has flexibility to determine the amount of services you would like to receive
 - Budget Samples:
 - Town Commits \$10,000 in non-federal match funds; Town will receive \$20,000 worth of services across 3 years
 - Town Commits \$50,000 in non-federal match funds; Town will receive \$100,000 worth of services across 3 years
 - Town Commits \$100,000 in non-federal match funds; Town will receive \$200,000 worth of services across 3 years

Sample RCDI Project and Outcomes of the Effort to Date

Applicant: NCIC

Recipient/Beneficiary: City of Newport, VT

Total Award Amount: \$250,000

Total Match Amount: \$250,000

Total Project Cost: \$500,000

Award Period: 9/21/2018 -9/24/2022

Project Summary:

The City of Newport, Vermont has experienced its share of economic hardships throughout the years from the persistent low household incomes represented in the community to a failed EB-5 program that left a physical hole in the downtown. In true Vermont fashion, the community will not dwell on these challenges and instead will focus on the vast prospects at hand including the opportunity to enhance recreation, attract new entrepreneurs and businesses, and to revive the picturesque and once bustling Main Street.

In early 2018, Vermont Council on Rural Development held a series of listening sessions in Newport, bringing together 150 participants to identify priorities for improving the community. The VCRD report states;

“Newport’s walkable downtown, lined with local restaurants and retail, a market, cafes, an Arts Center and gallery, historic buildings, and state and municipal office buildings is a tremendous economic and community asset. Downtown development has faced setbacks and challenges. Many residents see this moment as a critical turning point to move forward with revitalization in a way that supports and engages local residents, supplements and boosts the work of Newport City Renaissance Corporation, attracts and accommodates visitors, and brings vibrancy and activity to Newport’s downtown.”

The proposed RCDI project is the next step in that effort. The report prepared for the VCRD project will be a roadmap for next steps.

As an experienced technical assistance and community development advocate, NCIC will provide financial and technical assistance to the Recipient, Newport City Council, to develop their capacity and ability to undertake projects related to community and economic development. NCIC will enhance the Recipients capacity in regard to infrastructure development planning, fundraising, tourism and promotion, and business and entrepreneur support and attraction. In order to increase property values by 2%; increase sales at select participating downtown establishments by 2%; attract three new businesses to the community; double unique website visits (an indicator of increased tourism); and increase traffic counts by 5%, NCIC will assist the City Council of Newport in achieving the following:

Goal 1. Complete Implementable Action Plan of Priorities based on community meetings, data from consultants and planning studies including prioritized steps that will lead to physical improvements in the community.

Goal 2. Encourage and lead a viable construction project for vacant Main Street properties.

Goal 3. Develop a four-season outdoor recreational economy.

Goal 4. Build the capacity of the Newport Downtown Development Organization.

Goal 5. Support and attract businesses and entrepreneurs.

Newport RCDI Efforts to Date:

- NCIC has assisted in securing 19 grants for the City totaling over \$1,335,000 to support these goals.
- Projects include:
 - Improvements to Gardner Memorial Park
 - Intersection improvements
 - Pedestrian amenities including trail development, crosswalk, and sidewalk improvements
 - Equipment for City Departments such as Police radios
 - Destination development and marketing
 - Electric vehicle charging stations
 - Master Plan update
 - Municipal Record digitalization
 - Bylaw updates
- In addition to these efforts, NCIC has collaborated with the City and Northeast Kingdom Development Corporation, a 501c3 nonprofit, to raise funds for the purchase of the former Bogner Mill property which will be purchased by NEKDC, renovated and leased to a for-profit manufacturing business who will create approximately 100 jobs over the next 5-7 years.