



Jackson County Tourism Development Authority
Tourism Capital Project Fund request
Town of Dillsboro

Project Name: Bridge Construction at Monteith Farmstead Park

Amount requested: \$449,000

Amount Approved by JCTDA: \$125,000

Narrative: The Town of Dillsboro is planning to build a pedestrian bridge over the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad (GSMR) tracks in Monteith Farmstead Park, repurposing infrastructure left behind by NC DOT during a previous bridge replacement project. This initiative will establish a greenway connecting the park to Mark Watson Park and the town of Sylva, enhancing recreational opportunities and interconnectivity.

The estimated cost for building the bridge is around \$350,000, which will be offset by utilizing the abandoned DOT abutments. GSMR is aware and supportive of the project. The initiative involves collaborative efforts between Dillsboro, Sylva, Jackson County, and several non-profit organizations, including the Appalachian Women's Museum, and serves as a model for effective cooperation between state, local, and private entities.

The greenway will link Dillsboro and Mark Watson, improving the trail system and creating a comprehensive recreational loop. It will also provide extra parking for both towns during crowded events, promoting a healthier, sustainable lifestyle by encouraging active transportation.

In a 2022 workshop, the Dillsboro Board of Aldermen committed \$100,000 towards the project, supplemented by \$100,000 from a North Carolina General Assembly Directed Grant. The board has requested the JCTDA consider contributing the remaining necessary funds. The greenway's benefits are expected to reach beyond Dillsboro and Sylva, positively impacting the wider county and region.

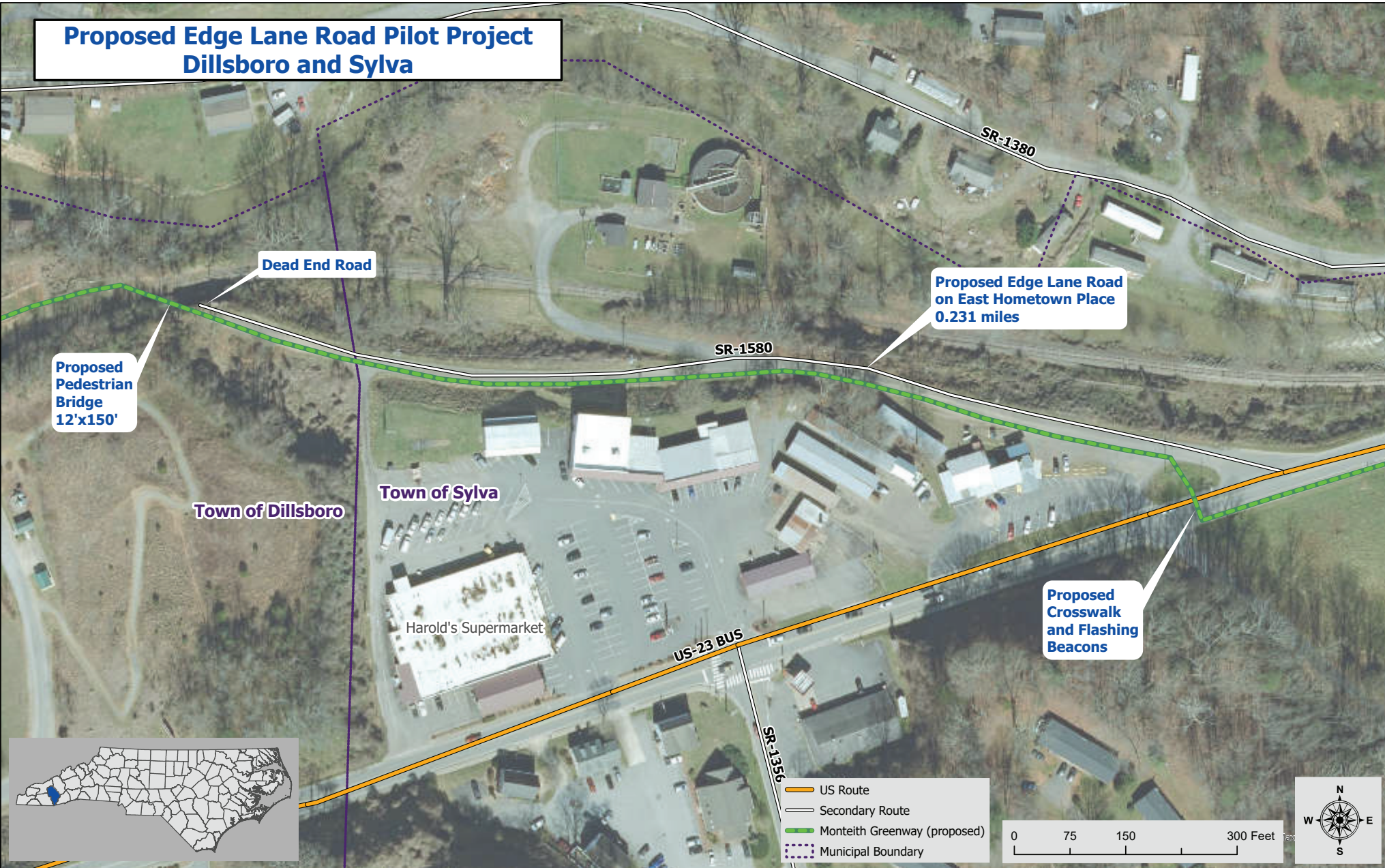
JCTDA Notes: The JCTDA has approved a funding amount for this project that is lower than the initial request from the Town of Dillsboro, which had requested that JCTDA cover 69% of the project's costs. While the proposed bridge would provide an additional route to Monteith Park, it's worth noting that an existing path through Hometown Place already provides parking access for events in Dillsboro. Moreover, sidewalks from Sylva to Dillsboro are already in place, forming a walking route already.

The project's completion, though aesthetically pleasing, may not directly contribute to increased tourism, given the limited number of year-round events held at the park, such as the Airing of the Quilts at the Appalachian Women's Museum. Furthermore, there are no current marketing plans to promote this new feature to potential visitors. While the project would undeniably be a valuable addition for residents, offering an extra walking route, it may not rank highly in terms of priority for funding when considering other upcoming projects. According to our legislation, projects funded under this program should drive additional visitation from outside of Jackson County.

The JCTDA has committed \$125,000 towards the project, contingent upon Dillsboro securing the rest of the required funding by the end of the fiscal year – June 30, 2024. The JCTDA's proposed contribution exceeds the amounts pledged by either Dillsboro or the NC General Assembly. The JCTDA Board acknowledges the project's potential as a community asset but emphasizes the lack of a clear link between its completion and a direct increase in visits to Jackson County, as well as the absence of a marketing plan to fully utilize this project.

Several other potential projects, including the resurfacing of historical discussions about a whitewater park in Dillsboro, promise to significantly boost tourism and are arguably more appropriate recipients of the TCPF funding. With this perspective, it's crucial that we strategically reserve funds for high-impact projects that directly enhance tourism, generate sales tax, and attract visitors to Jackson County. These initiatives should encourage visitor spending in our local businesses and promote overnight stays, thus fueling our local economy.

Proposed Edge Lane Road Pilot Project Dillsboro and Sylva







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MONTEITH FARMSTEAD PARK GREENWAY PRO FORMA ANALYSIS

VALUE AND COSTS NARRATIVE:

The total value of the project is \$999,000, accounting for projected costs of \$649,000, and in-kind costs of engineered abutments and infrastructure that remain from NC DOT Bridge Project B-5905 valued at \$350,000. This is a collaborative project, with elements of the project located within the towns of Dillsboro and Sylva. Project costs based on jurisdiction include \$524,000 within the Town of Dillsboro and \$125,000 within the Town of Sylva.

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS:

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|---|-------------------|
| Bridge Construction and Installation | \$ 350,000 |
| East Hometown Place Improvements | \$ 125,000 |
| West Hometown Place Edge Lane Treatment | \$ 25,000 |
| New Restroom Facilities | \$ 90,000 |
| Construction Contingency | \$ 59,000 |
| Project Cost | \$ 649,000 |
| In Kind Match | \$ 350,000 |
| Total Project Value | \$ 999,000 |

PROJECT MATCH:

The Dillsboro Board of Aldermen has allocated \$100,000 and secured \$100,000 in Directed Grant Funding from the North Carolina General Assembly, which creates a \$200,000 cash match. Engineered abutments and infrastructure left in place by NC DOT during the replacement of Bridge #27 (Project B-5905) are valued at \$350,000, as stated in the *Town of Dillsboro Resolution Requesting NCDOT Leave Existing Abutments and Infrastructure in Monteith Farmstead Park*. This creates a total cash and in-kind match of \$550,000.

GRANT REQUEST:

The Town of Dillsboro is requesting funds of \$449,000.