



Town of Pembroke

*98 Union Chapel Road
Pembroke, NC 28372*

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Pembroke Awarded \$5.2 Million Federal BUILD Grant

A \$5.2 million U.S. Department of Transportation grant has been awarded to the Town of Pembroke. The Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant is to be used for much-needed infrastructure improvements, primarily in the downtown district of the Town.

Town and North Carolina Department of Transportation funding will join the BUILD grant award for a total estimated project cost of \$6.69 million. The bulk of the funding will be used for new multi-modal transportation improvements and increased interconnectivity infrastructure in downtown Pembroke with the goal of creating a safer, more pedestrian-friendly area for residents and visitors.

The Town, along with local leaders and officials, have been seeking BUILD funding for the long-awaited improvement project for the last 5 years. The project was first initiated in 2015 thanks to the support of North Carolina Speaker of the House Tim Moore – whose support enabled the Town to begin an initial feasibility study for the downtown corridor.

[The first to announce the news on Thursday, Congressman Dan Bishop](#) said of the award, “The folks in Pembroke have been pursuing this grant for five years because of the critical need to increase the town’s transportation infrastructure to integrate with and complement improvements serving the University of North Carolina at Pembroke campus. I made it a top priority throughout my first year in Congress and worked closely with community and Lumbee Tribal leaders to understand and advocate effectively for it. The award demonstrates the commitment of the Trump Administration and U.S. DOT to helping rural communities thrive.”

Among other North Carolina leaders advocating for the project, Senators Richard Burr and Thom Tillis, touted the project as an important step in enhancing safety for the area, acknowledging

the downtown's critical role linking the Town, the Lumbee Tribe and The University of North Carolina at Pembroke.

"Today's announcement is great news for the Town of Pembroke," said Senator Richard Burr. "This federal grant award will create a safer transportation system between downtown Pembroke, the University, and the Lumbee Tribal lands. I want to thank Secretary Chao for recognizing the importance of this project. I also want to thank the state and local officials who helped bring this highly competitive grant to their community."

"This investment is a big deal for Pembroke, connecting the University of North Carolina at Pembroke to major areas of town by installing two-way left turn lanes on Highway 711 with pedestrian and bike paths," said Senator Thom Tillis. "This project will create safer access for those to enjoy the town and I am proud to have worked hard to make this opportunity a reality for Pembroke. I spoke to DOT Secretary Elaine Chao this morning and thanked her for her continued support for the great state of North Carolina."

Officials and leaders in the Town of Pembroke say this funding could not come at a better time—on the heels of three years of explosive enrollment growth at the university spurring the region's economy into action.

Over the last three years, the university's enrollment has swelled from 6,252 in the fall of 2017 to a record high of 8,262 in the fall of 2020. The more than 32% growth has been accompanied by new construction and development surrounding the university and in the Town. Two developments are nearing completion in the coming months—the mixed-use A.S. Thomas Center downtown and residential community the Villages at Hunter's Run. A third project on Prospect Road recently broke ground on an additional 192 residential units. In addition, a variety of retailers and businesses have begun to take note and see Pembroke as a good option for expansion.

Pembroke's Mayor says BUILD funding is a critical part of the Town's ability to match this growth in the community with key safety, infrastructure and aesthetic improvements.

"This 2020 BUILD grant award will ensure that we have the funding for important infrastructure improvements for our growing community while also greatly improving the safety of motorists and pedestrians in our Town," said Charles Gregory Cummings, Mayor of the Town of Pembroke. "I would like to thank Senator Richard Burr, Senator Thom Tillis and Congressman Dan Bishop for their long-term support of this project and their leadership in Congress. I would also like to thank the U.S. Department of Transportation for choosing the Town of Pembroke as one of the recipients of this grant this year."

This award follows a focused, collaborative effort by the Town of Pembroke (Mayor Greg Cummings, Mayor Pro-Tempore Channing Jones, Councilwoman Theresa Locklear, Councilmen Ryan Sampson and Larry McNeill and Town Manager Tyler Thomas) and community leaders, including Representative Dan Bishop, Sen. Thom Tillis, Sen. Richard Burr and UNC Pembroke

Chancellor Robin Cummings, among many others. Also championing the effort was the local elected state delegation.

“I am thrilled with the decision of Secretary Chao and the DOT to fund the Town of Pembroke’s BUILD grant. UNCP is proud to have worked with the Town’s leadership on this application,” said UNCP Chancellor Robin Gary Cummings. “Connecting the university to downtown in a safe, pedestrian-friendly way is important for our students and the citizens of Pembroke. The main street makeover, along with the soon-to-be-completed A.S. Thomas Center, will be a visionary transformation and impact the future growth of the town, our university and the region in a powerful way.”

Congressman Bishop added, “I’m thrilled we could get this done and look forward to the project breaking ground.”

The pivotal project is anticipated to begin in December 2020 and will take approximately two and a half years to complete in entirety.

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The Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development, or BUILD Transportation Discretionary Grant program, provides a unique opportunity for the DOT to invest in road, rail, transit and port projects that promise to achieve national objectives. Previously known as Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, or TIGER Discretionary Grants, Congress has dedicated nearly \$7.9 billion for eleven rounds of National Infrastructure Investments to fund projects that have a significant local or regional impact. <https://www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants/about>

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ABOUT TOWN OF PEMBROKE

The Town of Pembroke, North Carolina established in 1895, is located in Robeson County in Southeastern North Carolina, along the Lumber River. We are approximately seven miles east of Highway 74 and Interstate 95 intersection, two hours south of Raleigh, two hours east of Charlotte and just a little over an hour from several North and South Carolina beaches. Pembroke is a growing community regarded as the social, political, cultural and commercial center for the Lumbee Tribe, the largest American Indian tribe east of the Mississippi River, with over 58,000 members. www.pembrokenc.com

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