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Littleton Receives \$250K Grant to Improve Public Safety Communications

The Town of Littleton has received a \$250,000 state grant that will improve communication capabilities and cybersecurity for its public safety, electric and water departments.

The funding will enable extension of the town's municipal fiber network to the Newtown Road Water Storage Tank. This will replace existing cellular connections and enhance communication capabilities for the Littleton Police Department, Littleton Fire Department and the Littleton Electric Light and Water Departments.

"It's crucial to have reliable and high-speed communications for each of these departments throughout Littleton for public safety purposes," said Nick Lawler, General Manager of LELWD, which will manage the project and perform the work.

Currently, this area in town has no municipal fiber and only cellular communication is in use. The cellular communication can be intermittent and does not always provide the proper quality communication required for each public safety department.

"Our departments work as a team to protect and serve Littleton, and we know we can always count on Littleton Electric Light and Water to provide the support the police and fire departments need," said Littleton Police Chief Matthew Pinard.

Another key aspect to adding this fiber line extension would be to enhance cybersecurity. Cyberattacks are much more difficult for hackers on a fiber network versus a wireless network.

The project, estimated between \$300,000 and \$350,000, is expected to be completed in about six months. After the grant money, the remaining cost will be assumed by Littleton Light as a capital project. The project is scheduled to start late fall at the earliest and be completed by September 2023.



Assistant General Manager David Ketchen, Lieutenant Governor Polito, & Engineering and Operations Manager Patrick Laverty at Municipal Fiber

Littleton received the funding in the inaugural round of the Community Compact Cabinet's new Municipal Fiber grant program. Town officials were present to receive the grant on June 2nd at an event with Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito at Taunton City Hall.

According to the award letter from Polito, the demand for funding and interest in the program was overwhelming.

"Your application was chosen because it met the overarching goal of supporting the closing of critical gaps in municipal networks and connecting municipally-owned facilities to assist municipalities," said Polito, who serves as chair of the Community Compact Cabinet. "Your participation reflects another effort to modernize and enhance municipal government capabilities and connectivity."

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