

To: Cost Review and Schedule Subcommittee
From: Rob Aloise, Director of Transportation Planning
 Cara Radzins, Principal Transit Planner
CC: Transportation Committee
Date: May 24, 2019
Subject: Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside Ranking Meeting
 General Overview and Voting Procedures

A Special CRCOG Cost Review and Schedule Subcommittee meeting will take place from **10:00am to Noon on Monday, June 3, 2019** at CRCOG, 241 Main Street, 3rd Floor, Hartford, CT to prioritize projects to advance utilizing FFY2021-2025 federal Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside funding. The following five (5) project proposals have been short-listed by CRCOG staff from the eight (8) received as part of the solicitation:

<u>Town/City</u>	<u>Proposal</u>	<u>Cost (Fed. Share)</u>
Enfield	Town Farms Road Multi-Use Path	\$1,201,200
Hartford	Hartford - Windsor Riverwalk Extension, The Final Section	\$1,595,200
Mansfield	Downtown Pedestrian Loop Closure	\$1,614,000
New Britain	The Beeline Trail (Phase 1)	\$1,416,064
Simsbury	Tarriffville Connection - Farmington Canal Heritage Trail to Curtiss Park	\$1,582,744

*The attached **Summary of Solicitation Proposals** provides more details on each project proposal. Limited copies of each full proposal will be available for review at the meeting.*

CRCOG plans to submit to CTDOT three TA Set-Aside projects from CRCOG towns along with one project from either NVCOG or RiverCOG to expend an estimated \$6.36 million of available funds for the Hartford Transportation Management Area (TMA). The two unsuccessful short-listed projects will be submitted to CTDOT as contingency projects, available if another project cannot advance or if additional TA Set-Aside funding is provided for FFY2021-2025.

The above-listed municipalities have been invited to provide a brief (10-15 minutes) presentation on their proposal followed by questions from Committee members. After the presentations are finished, each Committee member will complete a Project Evaluation Form, ranking the projects from first (best) to last. The final ranking will be determined by placing the projects in priority order based on their average rankings. Per approved solicitation guidelines, it is suggested that the Committee consider the following when ranking the projects:

High number of potential users	Safety benefit
Cultural, historic, and aesthetic enhancement	Length of useful life
Relationship to other projects/future projects	Economic development benefit
Regional/statewide significance	Supports multi-modal travel
Environmental benefit/minimization of impact	

***CRCOG Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside Program
Summary of Solicitation Proposals - May 24, 2019***

The following summaries provide a general description of the five (5) short-listed project proposals that will compete for ranking in this TA Set-Aside solicitation. CRCOG plans to submit to the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) three TA Set-Aside projects from CRCOG towns along with one project from either the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments or the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments to expend an estimated \$6.36 million of available funds for the Hartford Transportation Management Area (TMA). The two unsuccessful short-listed projects will be submitted as contingency projects, available if another project cannot advance or if additional TA Set-Aside funding is provided for FFY2021-2025.

Note: CRCOG staff has made every effort to accurately summarize the primary components for each project. We have used sections of text from each proposal and expanded or removed information to be able to provide Committee members with a brief overview of all projects.

Enfield: Town Farms Road Multi-Use Path

Fed. Share Cost Estimate: \$1,201,200

The project will entail the engineering and construction of a 3,865' long, 10' wide multi-use path adjacent to Town Farm Road, providing improved access for a variety of recreational uses as well as connectivity to the extensive bicycle and pedestrian network, existing and planned, in Enfield. An existing multi-use path begins at the intersection of Raffia Road and Post Office Road and continues east along Post Office Road/Town Farm Road to its intersection of Abbe Road. The project will extend the path along Town Farm Road to the intersection with Broad Brook Road (State Route 191) where it will tie into the existing shared use lanes (sharrows) on Fletcher Road.

This project is a critical link to helping the Town of Enfield achieve its bicycle and pedestrian connectivity goals identified in its Complete Streets Policy. This segment of multi-use path is the last remaining link to connect Route 5 to the Town line. Shared-Use Lanes (sharrows) exist on Post Office Road from Route 5 to Raffia Rd, at which point the Statewide Multi-Use Trails System path begins at the intersection of Raffia Rd and Post Office Road/Town Farm Road and ends at the intersection of Town Farm Road and Abbe Road. Sharrows are also present on Fletcher Road from Broad Brook Road to the Town Line. This project is part of Phase 2 of 4 in the Town's Complete Streets plan and will connect the missing link from Abbe Road to Broad Brook Road to complete connectivity of a 4.3-mile corridor in the Town's bicycle and pedestrian network. This link will also help the Town achieve its goal to connect the missing links in the Statewide Multi-Use Trails System throughout the Town.

**Hartford: Hartford – Windsor Riverwalk Extension
The Final Section**

Fed. Share Cost Estimate: \$1,595,200

This project proposes the construction of a 2,250' linear section of the existing and under design Riverwalk multi-use trail along the Connecticut River, which follows seven miles of shoreline in Hartford and Windsor. This project represents the final piece of the trail. The Riverwalk will be 12' wide and paved, accommodating bicyclists, walkers, runners, and the mobility impaired. Funding for planning and permitting this section of the Riverwalk has already been secured and will be completed within the next year.

The Hartford-Windsor Riverwalk Extension has been prioritized in every relevant planning study completed in the last twenty years. For example, the Regional Bicycle Plan periodically updated by the Capitol Region Council of Governments, included the extension in its 2000, 2008, and 2015 editions. In addition, the city’s comprehensive plan for development, “One City One Plan” (2010), designated the area covered by the extension as park space in its future land use map, in the context of regional bicycle and pedestrian network connectivity. When it is connected to the existing Windsor Riverwalk, which extends from the Bissell Bridge to just north of the Hartford/Windsor line, the extension will provide a significant commuter route for bicyclists, as well as recreational opportunities for all those coming from the northern and northeastern suburbs of Hartford, the center of Windsor and across the river in South Windsor.

The extension will also have a significant positive impact on the underserved urban community adjacent to the trail head on Meadow Road, creating new recreation opportunities for residents of the North End of Hartford. This area was designated as a federal Promise Zone in 2015 – an economically distressed area where there are significant needs and opportunities for transformation. The North End is also notable for its health disparities.

Mansfield: Downtown Pedestrian Loop Closure

Fed. Share Cost Estimate: \$1,614,000

The project consists of the construction of the remaining two segments of Trail in a large loop which encompasses the Storrs area. Both locations propose an 8’ wide bituminous concrete multi-use trail connecting to existing walkways and multi-use trails. This funding will fulfill the vision to provide safe travel through the busy area in and around Downtown Storrs, University of Connecticut, E.O. Smith High School, Four Corners Area, and surrounding points of interest.

This project consists of two interconnected locations that lack an off-road multi-use trail. Location #1 is a proposed multiuse trail from the existing 5’ wide sidewalk at the Maple Road intersection, along Route 275 – South Eagleville Road, connecting to the existing 8’ multi-use trail at the intersection of Separatist Road. Location #2 is a proposed multi-use trail starting at the terminus of an existing 8’ wide multi-use trail at the intersection of Separatist Road and Hunting Lodge Road Extension, traveling along the edge of Hunting Lodge Road Extension, and terminating at the intersection with North Eagleville Road. At this intersection, the trail will connect with: an existing walk east toward the University; west toward housing units; and an 8’ wide multi-use trail north toward housing units and student housing.

The existing portions of this walk and trail system see a fairly high volume of commuters, joggers, walkers, bikers, wheelchairs, and destination users. However, these two locations remain breaks in this walk/trail loop, preventing the full extent of its usefulness. These two locations force users into the shoulder of the road. Location #1 has a very high volume of vehicles; though the shoulder is 4’-5’ wide the speed of the vehicles makes its use somewhat dangerous. Location #2 also has a very high volume of vehicles, the road is narrow, and there is no shoulder stripe. These conditions, combined with a narrow road section at a drainage culvert, force people to walk on front lawns.

New Britain: The Beeline Trail (Phase 1)

Fed. Share Cost Estimate: \$1,416,064

The project involves the design and construction of the first phase of the Beeline Trail. The alignment for this multi-use trail was developed as part of CRCOG’s Gap Closure Study, which was completed in 2018. When it’s fully constructed, the Beeline Trail will close the 4.9 mile gap

between the FCHT in downtown Plainville and the 5.5 mile multi-use trail located adjacent to CTfastrak. The first phase of the Beeline Trail is 4,050' in length and involves constructing a multi-use trail from Columbus Boulevard (near the downtown NB CTfastrak Station) west to West Main Street (S.R. 555). This section of the trail includes 1,850' of roadside multi-use trail and 2,200' of dedicated off-road multi-use trail which would be constructed primarily on state owned right-of-way. The trail would be a minimum of 10' wide, and its construction would require the construction of a number of retaining walls due to grading and topographical constraints.

The Beeline Trail project serves a multitude of needs and will serve a large and ethnically diverse population. New Britain is classified by Connecticut's Office of Policy and Management as an economically distressed and environmental justice community, and has one of the lowest per capita income levels in the state. Related to this the percentage car ownership is as low as 30% in some of the City's larger and more impoverished neighborhoods. Recognizing the need to accommodate lower cost forms of transportation in 2013 the City completed a City-wide Bicycle Connectivity Plan, and since 2013 has completed the initial installation of its "on-road" bicycle network which now consists of over 30 miles of bike lanes that essentially provides "on-road" bicycle connectivity through-out the city. The construction of the Beeline Trail in New Britain in combination with the 5.5 mile CTfastrak multi-use trail and the City's 3.25 mile Stanley Loop Trail (scheduled to be completed in 2020) would establish a strong network of off-road trails around New Britain.

*Simsbury: Tariffville Connection - Farmington
Canal Heritage Trail to Curtiss Park*

Fed. Share Cost Estimate: \$1,582,744

This 0.7 mile segment of trail will create a off-road route of approximately 1.8 miles from Simsbury center to Curtiss and Pattison Parks. These parks provide access to the Farmington River and include several sports fields. Additionally, the proposed trail is one of three multi-use trail segments known as the Tariffville Connection that will connect the FCHT to Tariffville, a village of Simsbury, and continue to the neighboring Town of Bloomfield. Once completed in its entirety, the Tariffville Connection will link the center of Town with the village of Tariffville by a five-mile off-road multi-use path. The eastern most segment linking Tariffville to Bloomfield is currently in final design and scheduled to be completed in 2020. This multi-use trail will connect to a multi-use trail section currently under construction in Bloomfield and scheduled for completion in 2019. As noted in the 2015 Capitol Region Transportation Plan, the Tariffville Connection is a key part of "Linking the Two Interregional Greenways." Upon completion of the Tariffville Connection, linkages will be provided from the FCHT, to the west, and to the Charter Oak Greenway, to the east.

Combined with the trail sections in Bloomfield, the Tariffville Connection will link the FCHT to Bloomfield's Griffin Corporate Park as well as on-road and off-road bicycle routes serving the industrial areas along the Day Hill Road corridor in Windsor and northwest Bloomfield. From a regional standpoint, this route is planned to continue from Bloomfield into Hartford serving as an off-road segment of the East Coast Greenway (ECG). Traveling on Hartford Road by bicycle is not ideal due to the grades, vehicle volume and speed. The subject project is an important start to establishing a safer route for the ECG between Simsbury and Hartford. In the short-term, the subject project represents a key connection from the FCHT and Simsbury Center to Curtiss and Pattison Parks. In the long-term, the Tariffville Connection provides an energy saving, alternative means of transportation linking the Villages of Weatogue, Simsbury and Tariffville. The Village of Tariffville, a National Register Place, is at the junction of the proposed trail, the Metacomet Hiking Trail, and the Farmington River gorge.