

July 27, 2022

Craig Babowicz  
Connecticut Department of Transportation  
2800 Berlin Turnpike  
P.O. Box 317546  
Newington, CT 06131-7546

**DRAFT for  
Transportation  
Committee review**

**RE: Transportation Rural Improvement Grant Program  
Feedback on Draft Guidelines**

Dear Mr. Babowicz,

We applaud the Connecticut Department of Transportation's (CTDOT) development of the Transportation Rural Improvement Grant Program (TRIP) as a new funding opportunity for our rural communities. We also appreciate the opportunity given for review of this program's draft guidelines by the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) and other Councils of Governments (COGs). CRCOG staff has solicited internal and Transportation Committee feedback on the draft TRIP guidelines, and our comments are provided below:

- Project eligibility should be expanded to include pavement rehabilitation projects.
- Project eligibility should be expanded to include additional roadway types. Many of the eligible towns do not have many, if any, town-owned roadways that are classified as minor collectors or above. Expanding the eligibility criteria would allow truly rural towns a greater opportunity to submit competitive projects.
- An increased funding allocation for this program would be appreciated. While we understand that the funding for this program is derived from the Large Vehicle User Fee, we encourage consideration of supplementing these funds with additional funds from the recent infrastructure bill, allowing for more projects to be funded under TRIP.
- We support the sliding scale scoring for the percentage of rural area in the applicant town, as currently shown in the draft guidelines.
- We do not see any reference to CTDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel Needs Assessment Form in the draft guidelines. We request clarification on whether this form will be required for applications. If it is required, this should be added to the guidelines.

- The draft guidelines only address the steps through project selection. If there is an expectation that CRCOG have a role beyond this, we request an opportunity to review draft guidelines related to administrative responsibilities following project selection.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, or concerns. We look forward to your responses to and incorporation of CRCOG's feedback.

Sincerely,

Robert Aloise, P.E.  
CRCOG Director of Planning

CC: Matthew Hart, CRCOG Executive Director  
Jon Colman, CRCOG Transportation Committee Chair  
David Elder, CTDOT  
Grayson Wright, CTDOT

DRAFT