

February 28, 2023

Ms. Kimberly Bradley, Trails & Greenways Program Coordinator  
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection  
79 Elm Street  
Hartford, CT 06106-5127

**Subject: DEEP Connecticut Recreational Trails Program 2023 Grant Application**

Dear Ms. Bradley:

CRCOG is pleased to support the Town of Newington's application for a Connecticut Recreational Trails Program grant for the proposed multi-purpose trail that would link and leverage existing trails, connecting the City of New Britain trail to the West Hartford trail system.

As the Executive Director of the Capitol Region Council of Governments and a former town manager, I know that key recreational trails are investments for the future that promote connectivity among residents and transportation corridors, economic development, and a healthy and safe option for residents to enjoy the town.

Not only would the proposed multi-use trail increase opportunities for safe biking, hiking, and walking in Newington and surrounding communities, it would help meet Connecticut's Recreation Tail Plan Goals, including:

- making communities better places to live by preserving and creating open spaces;
- encouraging physical fitness and healthy lifestyles;
- creating new opportunities for outdoor recreation and non-motorized transportation; and
- preserving culturally and historically valuable areas.

The trail's planned inclusion of interpretive guides and other materials for use on trails would provide users with more than just exercise. There would be many opportunities to educate the public about environmental protection, natural resources, culture, and history while taking advantage of recreational trails. For example, the trail would pass through a historic neighborhood, where trail users would enjoy seeing historic homes and other natural and cultural resources that would be highlighted along the route.

Another benefit of the proposed project is its proximity to other towns and cities (New Britain and West Hartford), three neighborhood schools, and Central Connecticut State

University. Other planned elements include ensuring parking and access to the trail for persons with disabilities, providing opportunities for all to enjoy the trail.

Funding for the proposed trail would leverage other state and federal grants as the town seeks to revitalize the area as part of its overall TOD plans. These efforts would support the economic development activities surrounding the trail and provide job opportunities to any existing and new businesses accessible by trail users.

Based on the reasons stated above, CRCOG urges the Department to approve the Town's application to the Recreational Trails Program Grant. I am happy to answer any questions you may have regarding our support of this exciting project.

Sincerely,



Matthew W. Hart  
Executive Director

CC: Mayor B. DelBuono, Town of Newington  
James Krupienski, Acting Town Manager  
CRCOG Policy Board & Transportation Committee  
R. Aloise, Director of Transportation Planning  
C. Radzins, Deputy Director of Transportation Planning