

March 10, 2023

The Honorable Antonia Moran
Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
4 South Eagleville Road
Mansfield, CT 06268

RE: 2024 Community Project Funding – Town of Mansfield Pedestrian Safety Improvements

Dear Mayor Moran:

On behalf of the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG), I am pleased to support the CT Route 195 (Storrs Road) Pedestrian Safety Improvements Project proposed by the Town of Mansfield.

This project, which would provide a pedestrian connection between the Four Corners mixed-use district and UConn's main campus, is consistent with CRCOG's regional vision of providing multi-modal access and complete streets infrastructure between important destinations. This arterial road has narrow shoulders, low to no lighting, and limited visibility due to hills and curves, creating hazards for pedestrians who are often observed walking in the travel lane. With more than 800 housing units proposed at Four Corners (80+ units restricted to households at 80% AMI), pedestrian traffic in this area will only increase. Additionally, the trail would connect to an existing multi-use trail along Middle Turnpike that is often used by senior citizens, students, and other residents. As a rural community, Mansfield has limited transit options, and this project would provide safe bicycle and pedestrian access to employment and essential services, expanding housing opportunities to households without a vehicle.

Within CRCOG's 2020 Complete Streets Plan, this segment of Storrs Road is specifically identified as a roadway within the Complete Streets Network, a defined network of routes prioritized for complete streets efforts. Similarly, the proposed improvements support CRCOG's Metropolitan Transportation Plan's goal of extending the region's bicycle and pedestrian networks and offering multi-modal options for travelers. Furthermore, the project is a direct outcome of a recommendation contained in the Eastern Gateways Study (2019), which was administered by CRCOG.

Based on the information provided to CRCOG, the project appears eligible for federal transportation funding under numerous FHWA programs including, but not limited to,

Surface Transportation Block Grant, Congestion Management and Air Quality, and Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funds. In anticipation of Federal earmark funding, this project was deemed to be eligible under Title 23 (Highways) and was added to CRCOG's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in 2021.

As this project is eligible for federal funding and would advance the goals of our regional vision, we strongly encourage its consideration for Community Project Funding.

Sincerely,



Matthew W. Hart
Executive Director

cc: CRCOG Policy Board & Transportation Committee
R. Aloise, Director of Transportation Planning
C. Radzins, Deputy Director of Transportation Planning