

To: Transportation Committee
From: Sotoria Montanari, LOTCIP Program Manager
Date: September 13, 2023
Cc: Mr. Colin Moll, Town of Suffield First Selectman
Rob Aloise, CRCOG Director of Transportation Planning
Cara Radzins, CRCOG Deputy Director of Transportation Planning

Subject LOTCIP Scope Modification: Suffield Farmington Canal Heritage Trail (L139-0003)

A Transportation Committee meeting will take place at 12 noon on Monday, September 18, 2023. At the meeting, we will be discussing and acting on the following:

Suffield Farmington Canal Heritage Trail Project (L139-0003)

This project was approved in the 2022 LOTCIP Solicitation and received a Commitment to Fund Letter (CTF) for \$1,278,400 in March 2023. The Town of Suffield is requesting a LOTCIP scope modification that will increase the length of the trail improvements from 4,700 feet to 6,550 feet. Based on feedback from the CTDOT Office of the Rail, the Town will eliminate the proposed replacement of a triple 72" drainage culvert with a pedestrian bridge. These scope modifications (increasing the trail length and retaining the culverts) would result in an overall reduction in project costs from \$1,278,400 to \$730,00.



The Town had initially requested a funding increase which was approved by the Transportation Committee in March 2023 for the costs associated with replacing the culvert with a pedestrian bridge. Because the Town holds a license agreement with the Office of Rail, the Town was required to coordinate its plans with the Rail Officer after receiving the CTF letter. CTDOT's Office of Rail expressed concerns with the planned culvert replacement.

Specifically, the Rail Officer indicated that if the culvert were replaced with a bridge, it would need to be designed to support a return of future rail use. Also, CTDOT is concerned that an existing fiber optic line along the trail may conflict with any proposed bridge abutments. The Town deemed a rail bridge cost prohibitive with the existing LOTCIP budget. Based on these concerns, the Town decided to forego the culvert removal and installation of the pedestrian bridge and instead proposes to expand the project limits north to encompass the entire trail within Suffield.

Staff recommends committee approval of the Suffield Farmington Canal Heritage Trail Project (L139-0003) LOTCIP scope modification request to expand the length of the trail improvements from 4,700 feet to 6,550 feet, and eliminating the replacement of the culvert with a pedestrian bridge, resulting in an overall decrease in project cost from \$1,278,400 to \$730,000.