

To: CRCOG Cost Review Sub-Committee

From: Michael Cipriano, Senior Transportation Planner

Date: May 30, 2024

Subject: Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Ranking:
General Overview and Ranking Procedures

A CRCOG Cost Review Sub-Committee special meeting will take place virtually from **10:00am to 12:00pm on Monday, June 10, 2024** to prioritize projects to advance utilizing FFY2026-2030 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding. The following seven (7) project proposals were received as part of the solicitation and will be presented at the meeting:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Cost (Federal Share)</u>
Berlin	Safe Routes to School Project	\$3,199,200
Bloomfield	Bloomfield Greenway	\$3,191,200
Glastonbury	Hebron Avenue Sidewalk Installation and Multi-Use Path Rehabilitation	\$1,980,000
Hartford	Hampton Street – Slow Street and Bicycle Boulevard	\$652,800
Mansfield	Southern Gateway Pedestrian Improvements	\$2,199,200
Simsbury	Tariffville Greenway	\$3,124,400
Wethersfield	Sidewalk Gap Closure Project	\$792,000

The attached ***Summary of Solicitation Proposals*** provides more details on each project proposal.

CRCOG plans to submit to the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) the top-ranked TAP projects from CRCOG municipalities with a total combined Federal cost share of approximately \$9.52 million. These projects will be submitted alongside project(s) from NVCOG and/or RiverCOG approximating a total combined Federal cost share of \$3.17 million to expend an estimated \$12.69 million of available funds for the Hartford Transportation Management Area (TMA). Lower-ranked CRCOG projects will be submitted to CTDOT as contingency projects for potential advancement if another project cannot advance or if additional TAP funding becomes available.

The above-listed municipalities have each been invited to provide a 10-minute presentation on their proposal followed by questions from Committee members. After the presentations are finished, the Committee member or designated representative for each municipality will complete a Project Evaluation Form, ranking the projects from first (best) to seventh. 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:

- Budget completeness and accuracy
- Public benefit, especially to high need areas
- Safety
- Improvements to transportation network/connectivity
- Feasibility and readiness to proceed

Summary of Solicitation Proposals

Note: CRCOG staff has made every effort to accurately summarize the primary components for each project. Application text may have been expanded or removed to provide Committee members with a brief overview of all projects.

Berlin: Safe Routes to School Project

Cost: \$3,999,000 (\$3,199,200 Federal Share)

This project consists of closing the gaps in the sidewalk network by constructing sidewalks and incorporating intersection improvements near Berlin schools to create safe routes to school for students. Roughly 17,390 linear feet of missing sidewalk have been identified around the five (5) Berlin public schools. The proposed sidewalk improvements are at various locations throughout town and include Worthington Ridge, Peter Parley Row, Lower Lane, Four Rod Road, Toll Gate Road, Kensington Road, Farmington Avenue, Wilcox Avenue, Magnolia Lane, and Main Street.

The project's primary purpose is to provide a safe and continuous network for children to get to school. However, there are also additional benefits to constructing an uninterrupted sidewalk network in Berlin. The constructed sidewalks would also provide families safe access to many destinations such as parks, recreational facilities, and open space areas like the Metacomet Trail. The sidewalks built from this project will also give the community uninterrupted sidewalk access to previously completed sidewalk projects around the Berlin Train Station and Kensington Village, which is home to major facilities such as Town Hall, Library, and Police Station on Kensington Road. In addition, it will enhance the walkability of Berlin's Historic District. The improved access to these and other facilities in Kensington Village will help revitalize the Kensington Village transit-oriented development (TOD) area. There have been crashes involving pedestrians in areas that have missing sidewalks. In these locations, pedestrians are more susceptible to injuries having been forced to walk in the vehicle travel way. The construction of sidewalks in these areas could help reduce crashes involving pedestrians.

Bloomfield: Bloomfield Greenway (Bloomfield High School to Hartford Town Line)

Cost: \$3,989,000 (\$3,191,200 Federal Share)

The proposed Bloomfield Greenway project utilizes the preferred alignment from the Capitol Region East Coast Greenway Gap Closure Study and includes design, permitting, rights of way, and construction of an approximately 2-mile off-road 10'-12'-wide multi-use trail. The project would begin at the Hartford/Bloomfield town line along the existing Griffin Line Railroad and head north utilizing approximately 800 feet of the Griffin Line right-of-way as a rail-with-trail to its intersection with Tobey Road. The trail then heads easterly on Tobey Road for approximately 700 feet then northerly through land of the Copaco Shopping Center to Cottage Grove Road (CT-218). From Cottage Grove, the trail heads westerly to the intersection with Tyler Street then northerly for approximately 1,500 feet to Park Avenue (CT-178). The trail then heads westerly on the north side of Park Avenue for approximately 4,300 feet to Crestview Drive.

The Copaco Shopping Center is identified in the Bloomfield Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) as a "targeted development area" but has limited pedestrian connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods. The Bloomfield Greenway would provide direct access to the commercial area for residents without cars while also improving access to CTtransit bus routes. The section along Park Avenue would improve local connectivity between neighborhoods, the Bloomfield Human Services Center, Carmen Arace Middle School, Bloomfield High School, and Metacomet Elementary School. Bloomfield is identified as an Environmental Justice community, and the project would promote a healthier community, increase economic development, increase environmental preservation and safety, and improve social equity and community interaction.

Glastonbury: Hebron Avenue Sidewalk Installation and Multi-Use Path Rehabilitation

Cost: \$2,475,000 (\$1,980,000 Federal Share)

This proposed project limits extend along Hebron Avenue (State Route 94) from its intersection with Manchester Road (State Route 83) and traveling approximately 8,300 feet westerly to the Bell Street intersection. The Town proposes the construction of approximately 3,200 feet of 5'-wide concrete sidewalks along Hebron Avenue between Bell Street and Harvest Lane. In addition, the proposed scope includes rehabbing a 10'-wide paved multi-use trail that extends from Harvest Lane eastward to the Manchester Road (Route 83) intersection. Originally, the existing trail was constructed by CTDOT in conjunction with a 2003 project to realign Hebron Avenue to alleviate a serious safety problem. Additional work in this proposed project includes addressing storm drainage, grading, driveway entrance condition, and the establishment of vegetative buffers between residential structures and the roadway.

The scope of this project would complete a 15-year Town effort to provide safe transportation alternatives to non-motorized users by offering an alternative to the high volume and speeds of the Hebron Avenue corridor. This bicycle and pedestrian friendly alternative would connect East Glastonbury with the Town Center, public spaces around the Connecticut River, and the recently completed Putnam Bridge multi-use trail which allows users to connect with the neighboring towns of Wethersfield and East Hartford.

Hartford: Hampton Street – Slow Street and Bicycle Boulevard

Cost: \$816,000 (\$652,800 Federal Share)

The proposed project looks to build off a successful Slow Streets and bicycle boulevard pilot program on Hampton Street between Tower Avenue and Earle Street in the Northeast neighborhood of Hartford. The Northeast neighborhood is home to a diverse population; however, it faces numerous challenges including poverty, health disparities, and low employment.

The original pilot program, initially designed to be temporary in nature, was initiated in the fall of 2020 to discourage through trips by motor vehicle and to create a safe, convenient bicycle crossing by incorporating curb extensions/bump outs, a mini-island, pavement markings, and signage tailored to the Slow Streets program. Since the City installed the traffic calming devices along Hampton Street, speeding in a southbound direction was reduced by nearly 50%. The City engaged the community by way of door-to-door surveying along the street where over 70% of respondents noted that they were more likely to use the Slow Street for essential travel by walking or biking. In addition, nearly 85% of respondents were supportive of making the installation permanent as envisioned by this proposed project.

Mansfield: Southern Gateway Pedestrian Improvements

Cost: \$2,749,000 (Federal Share: \$2,199,200)

The proposed project would create a 5'-wide bituminous pedestrian walkway of approximately 3,230 feet in length on Mansfield City Road from North Frontage Road (CT-632) to Independence Drive, and North Frontage Road (CT-632) from Storrs Road (CT-195) to an existing terminus approximately 800 feet west of Conantville Road. This project would connect higher density residences to one of the Town's commercial districts, the Southern Gateway. The project will considerably reduce the size of the intersection of Mansfield City Road and Meadowbrook Lane. This reduction will provide a shorter distance for pedestrians to be within the travel way but will have a secondary effect of reducing speeds. This is a result of the horizontal shift of Mansfield City Road between Independence Drive and Meadowbrook Lane to minimize impact to residences on the eastern side of Mansfield City Road.

This project is located both within and next to a Distressed Community, as defined by the Connecticut Department of Economic Development. The connection would provide easier access to regional public transit stops and improve access to employment opportunities. The proposed walkways would also provide a safer location for both bicyclists and pedestrians to access the Southern Gateway Commercial District.

Simsbury: Tariffville Greenway

Cost: \$3,905,500 (Federal Share: \$3,124,400)

The proposed project includes design, permitting, and construction of a minimum 12'-wide off-road multi-use trail from the existing Farmington Canal Heritage Trail to the newly created Tariffville-Bloomfield Connector Trail (with the exception of the bridge over the Farmington River).

The alignment of the proposed trail was endorsed by the Simsbury Board of Selectmen, East Coast Greenway Council, and CRCOG as part of the CRCOG East Coast Greenway Gap Closure Study Report for Simsbury. The alignment west of the river will use an abandoned rail corridor elevated above the floodplain and wetlands. Using this existing rail corridor will limit any environmental impacts. To the east of the river, in the Tariffville section of Simsbury, between the river and Tariffville Park is approximately 0.5 miles that is located within private property and much of the old rail embankment is generally lost due to construction of Governors Bridge Condo Association in the 1980s. Due to the condo buildings, construction of the proposed trail would be closer to the Farmington River compared to the original rail corridor.

Wethersfield: Wethersfield Sidewalk Gap Closure Project

Cost: \$990,000 (Federal Share: \$792,000)

In 2015, the Town performed a walk audit with CTDOT's Safe Routes to School consultants and identified gaps in the existing sidewalk network. Based on information collected from those walk audits, the Town has assessed the existing conditions of both walking and biking routes to school and identified issues that may discourage or prevent walking and bicycling. Factors identified during the walk audit included social aspects, traffic volumes and speeds, topography or presence or absence of existing sidewalks, and/or bike lanes.

Through the Wethersfield Sidewalk Gap Closure Project, the Town is looking to create Complete Streets that are safe for all users while achieving equal connectivity for both on- and off-road users while continuing to implement improvements identified in the Town's Complete Streets Policy. These improvements are focused on the Hillcrest Elementary School area, which is approximately 2,800 linear feet along Highland Street, Collier Road, and Prospect Street (CT Route 287) to Willow Street, and the Charles Wright Elementary School area which runs approximately 1,400 feet and encompasses Oxford Street, Cumberland Avenue, and segments of Livingston Street and Lexington Street. In addition to creating better connectivity by installing sidewalks, the project also includes curb bump outs, ADA compliant sidewalk ramps, and improved striping.