

## **CTDOT Active Transportation Unit**

### **RFQ Review: Eastern Shoreline Path Planning-Level Design (Waterford, CT)**

#### **Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SECOG)**

The Connecticut Department of Transportation, Active Transportation Unit appreciates the opportunity to review SECOG's RFQ for planning-level design of the Eastern Shoreline Path in Waterford. DOT strongly supports advancement of this critical regional corridor, which represents an important link in Connecticut's coastal active transportation network connecting East Lyme, Waterford, New London, Groton, and Stonington.

#### **Overall Support**

This effort aligns with CT statewide goals to expand safe, connected, and equitable bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, including implementation of Complete Streets principles and long-term Vision Zero objectives. The Eastern Shoreline Path is a high-value corridor with strong potential to support both recreational and commuter bicycle and pedestrian travel.

#### **Key Technical Recommendations**

##### **1. Facility Design Approach**

- Prioritize All Ages and Abilities bicycle facility design standards
- Emphasize low-stress, separated facilities where feasible
- Evaluate alternatives with strong consideration for traffic speed, volume, and roadway context
- Ensure safe treatment of arterial crossings, rail crossings, and constrained segments

##### **2. Network Connectivity**

- Clearly identify and address gaps between existing shoreline segments
- Ensure strong connections to:
  - East Lyme shoreline facilities
  - New London multimodal and transit hubs
  - Groton and Stonington regional trail systems
- Incorporate logical access points to schools, parks, and waterfront destinations

##### **3. Safety and Data Analysis**

- Use systemic safety and crash-based analysis to guide recommendations
- Evaluate high-risk corridors and intersections along the alignment
- Integrate speed management considerations in facility selection

##### **4. Wayfinding & User Experience**

- Coordinate signage plan with regional shoreline trail branding efforts
- Include distance, destination, and multimodal connection information
- Ensure consistency with emerging CTDOT bicycle wayfinding standards

## **5. Public Engagement**

- Encourage inclusive outreach to municipalities, residents, and advocacy groups
- Include engagement strategies for transit-dependent and underserved populations
- Utilize both in-person and digital engagement tools to broaden input

## **6. Implementation & Phasing**

- Organize recommendations into short-, mid-, and long-term phases
- Identify quick-build opportunities where appropriate
- Address right-of-way, utility, drainage, and permitting constraints early

## **Additional Considerations**

- Coastal resiliency and sea level rise impacts along shoreline segments
- Seasonal tourism and multimodal demand fluctuations
- Long-term maintenance and jurisdictional responsibilities

## **Summary**

CTDOT supports SECOG's effort and views this study as a key step toward completing a continuous Eastern Shoreline active transportation corridor. Incorporating AAA design principles, strong safety analysis, and robust multimodal connectivity will significantly strengthen the study's outcomes and future implement ability.