

# DOT PLANNING STUDY - Application

**Date of Submittal: 10/16/2025**

## **1.0 Study Title**

Provide the title of the Study: **SEAT New London Local Service COA**

## **2.0 Study Sponsor**

The Study Sponsor is the applicant and will be the entity that enters into agreement with the Council of Governments for program administration and funding. Please indicate the formal legal names of the organization and duly authorized representative.

Study Sponsor: **Southeastern CT Council of Governments (SECOG)**

## **3.0 Study Contact (Representative from Study Sponsor)**

The Study Contact must be a representative of the Study's Sponsor agency. The Study Contact will act as the project manager and will be the primary person to which correspondence, inquiries and study coordination will be directed regarding the application and subsequent project if funds are awarded.

First Name: **Kate**

CT Municipality: **Norwich**

Last Name: **Rattan**

Division/Office: **SECOG**

Title: **Director of Transportation Planning**

Street: **5 Connecticut Ave**

Telephone No: **860-889-2324x111**

Zip Code: **06360**

Facsimile No:

Email Address: **krattan@secogct.gov**

## **4.0 Study Location**

(Clearly Define Study Location and Limits)

The study will focus on the City of New London local service operated by SEAT; currently routes 12, 13, 14, 15 and New London Smart Ride Microtransit Service. Consideration of other routes (1, 2, 3, 108), which utilize New London as a pulse point may need to be included in the analysis, but will not be the focus of this study.

**Identify the municipality (ies) having boundaries encompassing the study location.**

**Primary CT Municipality:** New London

**Other Municipality (ies):** (SEAT TD)

**LOCATION MAP:** Depict the location of the study on a base map such as a town road map, GIS map, aerial photo, or another base map suitable to clearly depict the study's overall location. Provide a hard copy.

Service Period ▾

Ship Nautilus

### Transit lines

**IN SERVICE (16)**

- 1 Norwich / New London Via Rt 32
- 2 Norwich / New London Via Rt 12 & Groton
- 3 New London To Niantic Via Boston Post ...
- 4 Norwich To Occum / Taftville
- 5 Norwich To Norwich Business Park Via ...
- 6 Norwich To Norwich Wal-Mart Via Marc...
- 7- Norwich To Hamilton Ave, Mohegan Su...
- 8 Lisbon Landing To Jewett City
- 9 Norwich To Lisbon Landing Via Rt 12
- 11 Groton Local
- 12 New London To Crystal Mall & New Lon...
- 13 New London To Lawrence Memorial Ho...
- 14 New London To New London Mall, Wat...
- 15 New London / Waterford Local Night Se...
- 108 New London To Foxwoods Via Groton ...

**SYSTEM STATS**

3000 ft

mapbox © Mapbox © OpenStreetMap Improve this map

English

## 5.0 Study Description

*Briefly describe - Additional pages can be attached.*

This study will evaluate the performance, efficiency, and rider experience of the New London local bus service provided by SEAT. It will provide data-driven insights to support service planning, resource allocation, and strategic improvements aligned with community needs and transit goals. The study will analyze existing transit data and public input (garnered through one public outreach event with both in-person and remote participation options) to develop alternatives for fixed route, hybrid, and micro transit service. Ultimately, the study will recommend services and propose specific routes, headways and timetables, fare structures, and service areas.

## 6.0 Purpose and Need

*Briefly explain the purpose and need for the study including anticipated significance and impact. Provide any additional information and data that may assist with determining the eligibility of and ranking of this study. This is an opportunity to discuss why this study should be selected for funding.*

With the last Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) completed for SEAT in 2015, SEAT is overdue for an operational analysis update, as the typical update cycle for a transit COA is every 5-10 years. CTDOT's Bureau of Public Transportation will undertake a Statewide COA during the next four years; however, New London service requires comprehensive analysis immediately to address significant misalignment with transit users' needs and the anticipated termination of of existing, locally-funded micro transit service, which was determined to conflict with FTA guidance and will sunset in July of 2026. SECOG intends to assist SEAT in an analysis of local service in New London ahead of the statewide plan so that recommendations can be implemented within a shorter timeframe.

Daily ridership data was included in the 2015 COA, showing significant usage of local routes 12, 13, and 14 throughout the week; however, the New London local routes are not serving the constituency adequately. Constituents are discontented with routing of existing local service and the potential loss of micro transit service in July of 2026. The 2015 COA also predicted an increase to annual ridership between 13-28% under two cost neutral plans and a system expansion plan. The 2024 American Community Survey reports that 15.3% of households in New London do not have access to a vehicle, making efficient public transit a priority in New London.

The 2015 COA's recommendation was a cost neutral service improvement requiring route realignment and converting SEAT's flag down system to a stop-based system. The plan also included adjustment to the funding formula which determines the responsibility of each community within the Transit District. Since the 2015 COA's publishing, the cost neutral recommendations were implemented. The most transformative of the recommendations, conversion to a stop-based system from a flag down system, is currently in the process of being implemented.

Within the City of New London, SEAT's micro transit service was begun as a pilot and has operated for four years, starting in 2021. The service was paid for initially with State pilot funding, but funding for it was not included within the Transit Operating Document upon completion due to the overlap of the service with the fixed route service. Upon completion of the state pilot period, the service was funded with ARPA federal funding allocated to the SEAT District and continues now funded with local and state funding. The service is popular among users, however it is necessary to provide an operational plan for New London which meets constituent needs, is financially feasible, and avoids negative impacts to Title VI protected classes.

The proposed study will consider service operations within New London, including existing routes 12, 13, 14, 15 (night service which combines routes), and micro transit. The study does not anticipate significant revision to the intermunicipal routes 1, 2, 3 and 108 which provide service in New London, however the study will recommend a plan including coordination between local and intermunicipal routes.

The proposed study will provide the Transit District with recommendations for implementation which will be operationally and financially feasible and reflect data-driven analysis and public input.

## **7.0 Community Character and Regional Significance**

*Briefly describe the relationship and fit of this study to other studies planned or underway as well as how this study is consistent with the municipal Plan of Conservation and Development in the area served and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Be sure to include other pending or approved studies/grants that would affect the outcome.*

**SEAT's 2015 COA** comprehensively analyzed the routes, frequency, and geography of the SEAT district, which includes 0 member towns. The plan identified that within the transit district New London was one of the most "transit supportive" communities and was part of the core SEAT service area. Routes 12, 13, 14 and 15 accounted for roughly 600 daily passengers. The current service (2026) is not consistent with the 2015 recommended Cost Neutral Plan B, which improved efficiency of the existing system. The conversion of the system to a stop based system, from the existing flag down system is funded and authorized but not yet completed at this time.

**New London's 2017 POCD** includes several recommendations related to transit including: Page 58-62: Establish and Maintain a Balanced Transportation System. Strategies include "Provide transportation to meet the mobility and access needs of the community" and "Create a balanced transportation system that addresses pedestrian, bicycle, vehicle and transit needs." The local POCD identifies the link between transportation options and growth, economic development opportunities, and sustainability. It is noted that New London is served by SEAT as well as several ferry and rail services and that New London is a multi-modal hub. The POCD identifies citywide ADA improvements which support transit use.

### **New London Downtown Transportation and Parking Study 2017**

"The creation of a more robust, efficient and accessible multi-modal transit system can help relieve the roadways' need for additional capacity by decreasing the number of drivers operating single occupancy vehicles to and from the City each day. Additionally, improving transit ridership can help the City achieve multiple related goals including meeting or exceeding environmental and air quality standards, improving public health, increasing overall pedestrian walkability (key for downtown retail), and providing mobility options for residents who cannot drive such as people who are elderly, disabled, or cannot afford to own an automobile." The Study also notes Greyhound service at Union Station; however since the publishing of this study, Greyhound no longer serves New London. The study continues, "However, recent focus on the need for additional parking near the Cross Sound Ferry Terminal and Union Station has highlighted the opportunity to readily expand the Water Street Parking Garage into this area. A second option would be to relocate the Greyhound bus stop to just north of its current location on the east side of Water Street. The SEAT bus area would need to also be relocated somewhat to the north as a result of this option. The entire Water Street transit area will need to be redesigned; not only for possible geometric street realignment and new bus-bay design, but also bus shelters, outdoor waiting area(s), streetscape, etc. Lastly, the City of New London has indicated that other bus carriers have recently expressed interest in having a stop in the downtown." This identification of needs is addressed in the RAISE grant funded project further described below (expansion of parking garage, relocation of bus hub). The recommendations of this study are focused on parking, however several recommendations related to parking will have a potential impact on transit. #1 Modify the City Zoning Regulation parking requirements to lead to more efficient use of downtown parking and to better align with the goal of downtown redevelopment: Since the study's publishing, parking requirements have been waived or reduced for several developments and shared municipal lots have been refurbished. In other areas, on street parking has been assigned through permits. In sum, though downtown residency has increased, parking development has been lower. #2 Better Manage Demands (Parking Demand Management): the city has updated parking zones and fees to encourage parking turnover in the downtown and other modes including pedestrian, bicycle and bus use.

## SECOG RPOCD 2017

This study aligns with the 2017 SECOG RPOCD by advancing its transportation and mobility goals for the New London area. The RPOCD emphasizes improving transit access in urban centers, enhancing multimodal connectivity, and supporting equitable transportation options for low income and aging populations. New London is identified as a regional hub for rail, bus, and ferry services, with specific recommendations to increase SLE rail frequency and implement SEAT bus route improvements to boost efficacy and ridership. By focusing on optimizing local bus service and strengthening connections between SEAT routes and other modes of travel, this study supports the RPOCD's vision for coordinated transportation and sustainable economic growth. Additionally, the study complements regional priorities for resilience and accessibility in downtown New London, ensuring that transportation investments reinforce the city's role as a vibrant, connected, and inclusive urban center.

## SECOG MTP 2023

Section 4.4 identifies that SEAT operates as a regional transit district with membership of 9 SECOG towns and the requirement to generate 30% of the operating costs; revenue is generated from both farebox revenue and municipal dues. This is compared to CT Transit service, which does not have a local match. The 2023 MTP includes the Water Street Garage and pedestrian access project funded by RAISE.

Pending and approved studies and grants with an impact on the outcome of the proposed study include:

**I-95 PEL (CTDOT)**, which is scoped to include transit as a means of congestion mitigation and system management.

**Downtown New London Multimodal Utilization Improvements Project (US DOT RAISE grant)** will fund construction of improvements to the Water Street Garage and Bus hub which will serve SEAT and River Valley TD. This work will include installation of a pedestrian overpass from the Garage across Water Street and the NEC rail corridor providing safer access to ferry docks, USCGA museum (under construction), and SLE and AMTRAK rail platforms.

**Development Permits** New London has added hundreds of rental units within the downtown in recent years and continues to approve more commercial and residential development.

## 8.0 Study Cost Estimation

Provide the estimated cost of the study, include a detailed cost estimate and the basis for the cost estimate. Depending upon the funding source appropriated for the study, the municipality or COG may need to contribute between ten percent (10%) and twenty percent (20%) of the total study cost. The municipality may choose to contribute more than 10% of the local match to the cost of the study. (Studies funded with LOTCIP will not require a local match). If the study is chosen at the end of the Study Selection process and federal funds will be applied, the municipality may be asked to provide documentation showing the local match will be secured.

Total Study cost: **\$50,000**

Municipal/COG cost (): **\$5,000**

Fed (PL)	State	COG	Local	Total
40,000	5,000	5,000	0	50,000

Additional funding contributed by the Municipality/COG:

### **Local Match Financing**

The minimum ten percent (10%) or twenty percent (20%) match typically must come from non-federal sources as there are restrictions on the application of federal monies to the match share of PROGRAM funds. Indicate whether the local match can reasonably be secured by the study sponsor for the project if PROGRAM funds are authorized. LOTCIP funds may not be used as a local match.

Are you providing the match with non-federal sources?  Yes  No

Can the local match be reasonably secured?  Yes  No

Is the applicant able to provide the commitment for the local match for this study?  Yes  No

## 9.0 Attachments and Additional Information/Materials


**Please limit comments and attached pages to those critical for Review of the Application and proper understanding of the Study Proposal.**

Please indicate any additional materials being submitted with the application package or provided to the COG for consideration. If additional pages were used to answer questions on this application, please indicate the section and number of pages.

<u>Number of Pages:</u>	<u>Application Section:</u>	<u>Brief Description:</u>
1 pg	8	Attachment 2: Schedule and Budget page
51 pgs <a href="#">SEAT-Final-Report-110115_reduced.pdf</a>	all	SEAT Bus Study Final Report, October 2015(most recent SEAT COA)
292 pgs <a href="#">SEAT-Final-Report-110115-Appendices-reduced.pdf</a>	all	SEAT Bus Final Report - Appendices

Legal Name of Duly Authorized Representative: **Amanda E. Kennedy**

Signature of Duly Authorized Representative Date (MM/DD/YYYY)

  
2026-Mar-06 11:08

# Attachment 1: Corridor Study Estimate and Schedule

Budget	Schedule (in months):	Months							
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
\$ 15,000.00	1 Public Outreach								
	-development of survey			^					
	-stakeholder outreach to operators and City			^	^				
	-in-person outreach event				^				
	-formal public hearing of draft report					H			
	-30-day comment period								
	-SEAT Board Adoption						A		
\$ 10,000.00	2 Data Collection/ Analysis								
\$ 15,000.00	3 Alternatives Development								
\$ 8,000.00	4 Recommendations Report					D, F			
\$ 2,000.00	6 Direct Charge								
In Kind by SEAT and SECOG	Project management	C,S	O-B		R	R		Implementation >>	
<b>Total:</b>									
\$ 50,000.00									
\$ 40,000.00	PL Fed								
\$ 5,000.00	PL COG Match								
\$ 5,000.00	PL State Match								
			^	Public or Stakeholder Engagement					
			O-B	On-Boarding					
			C	CTDOT Authorization					
			S	Solicitation					
			R	Review					
			D	Draft					
			F	Final					
			H	Hearing					
			A	Adoption					