Stakeholder and Public Engagement Summary

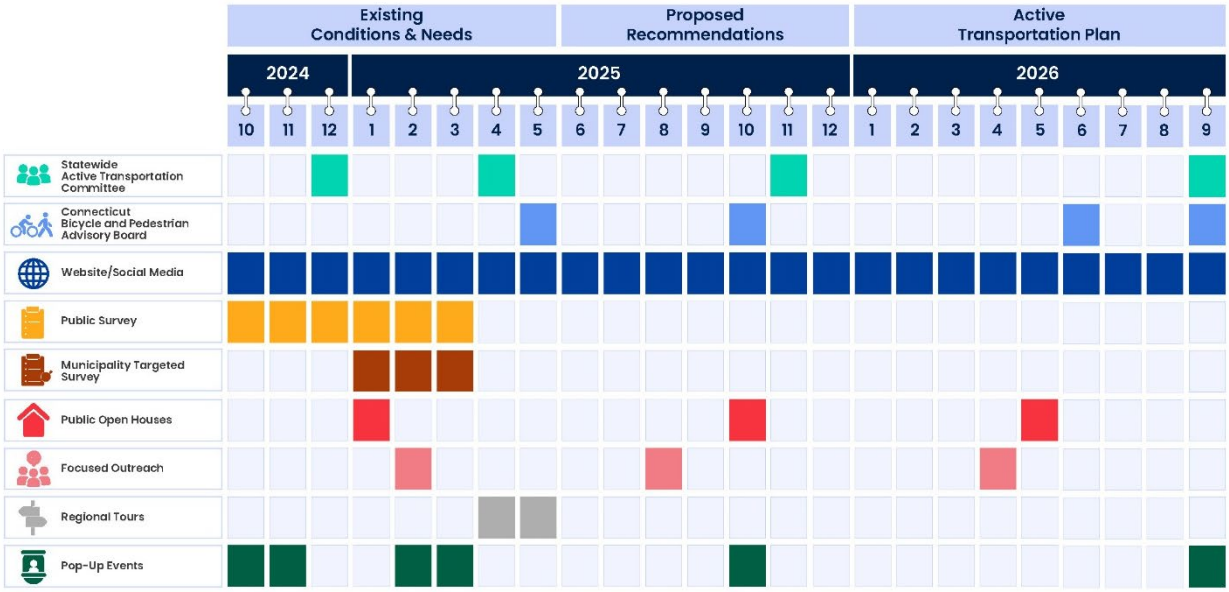
Phase 3: Active Transportation Plan

Stakeholder and public engagement has continued throughout the lifespan of the CTDOT ATP project, with major events at three key phases:

1. Existing Conditions and Needs
2. Proposed Recommendations
3. Active Transportation Plan

Building on the engagement and technical work completed during Phases 1 and 2, Phase 3 focused on developing the final Active Transportation Plan (ATP). This phase included refining and finalizing recommendations, tools, and supporting materials based on stakeholder input, public feedback, and technical analysis gathered throughout the earlier phases. The resulting plan will reflect the priorities, needs, and opportunities identified during the project and will provide a framework for advancing active transportation across Connecticut.

Overall Schedule

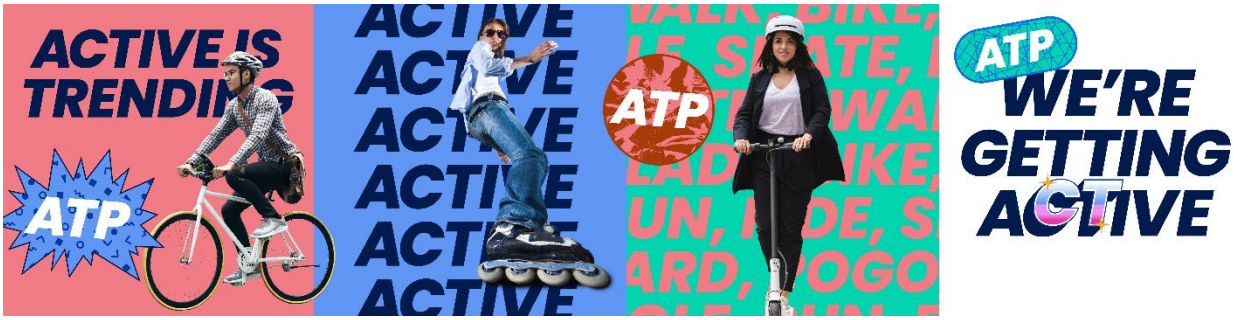


Public Engagement

Social Media Campaign

As part of the Phase 3 outreach, a social media campaign was implemented to increase awareness of the Statewide ATP and encourage participation in the virtual public meetings and broader planning process. The campaign combined organic and paid content across Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter).

To strengthen audience connection, the campaign used a creative 1980s–1990s theme centered on movement and nostalgia. This approach was intended to prompt audiences to reflect on a time when walking and biking were more common, while also reframing active transportation as accessible, familiar, and engaging.



Performance results indicated that paid content significantly outperformed organic posts across all key metrics. The paid video posts generated the strongest overall reach, with more than 68,000 impressions and over 43,000 users reached, resulting in nearly 40,000 engagements at an exceptionally low cost per engagement of approximately $0.01. Paid static posts also performed well, generating strong engagement (approximately 900–960 interactions per post) and higher levels of comments, shares, and link clicks compared to organic content.

In contrast, organic-only posts achieved limited visibility and engagement, reinforcing the importance of paid promotion in expanding reach beyond existing followers. Overall, the campaign generated 88,615 impressions, reached 57,339 users, and produced 41,272 total engagements, supporting 159 total registrations during the campaign period.

The table below displays more detail:

Date	5/5/2026	5/11/2026	5/14/2026	5/19/2026	*Total*
Post Type	Static	Video	Static	Static	
Paid (Y/N)	N	Y	Y	Y	
Impression	NA	68,040	7,803	12,772	***88,615***
Reach	NA	43,142	4,888	9,309	***57,339***
Engagement	NA	39,399	910	963	***41,272***
Reactions	19	114	827	853	***1,813***
Comments	6	0	8	12	***26***
Saves	NA	1	18	19	***38***
Shares	7	9	15	25	***56***
Link Clicks	NA	5	26	34	***65***
Money Spent	$0	$388.02	$211.22	$299.36	***$848.60***

Public Open Houses

The project team conducted two virtual open houses in May 2026 to gain feedback on proposed recommendations. A summary of the open houses for Phase 3 is included in **Appendix A.**

A total of 99 individuals attended the two virtual open houses. The attendance numbers for each open house were as follows:

Date	Time	Attendance
5/19/2026	12:00 PM	71
5/20/2026	6:00 PM	28

Each open house included a presentation that discussed the public engagement feedback received throughout the project, the final ATP and supporting materials, the development of the future statewide bicycle network map, and the plan's key implementation strategies and funding programs. The presentation also highlighted how feedback collected during previous phases helped shape the final recommendations and priorities.

At the conclusion of each presentation, attendees had the opportunity to ask questions, provide comments, and share additional feedback. Across both meetings, participants raised several consistent themes and concerns:

Safety & Infrastructure	• Strong support for separating cyclists and pedestrians, particularly with increasing e-bike speeds. • Concerns about bicycle and pedestrian safety along busy state roads. • Requests for protected bike lanes, cycle tracks, wider sidewalks/shared-use paths, safer crossings, and physical buffers between bike lanes and vehicle traffic.
Connectivity	• Frequent feedback that existing bike networks are fragmented and often end in unsafe conditions. • Desire for stronger connections between low-stress networks, major corridors, and key destinations. • Concern that many proposed routes remain "traffic-tolerant," limiting accessibility for most users.
Coordination	• Questions about state vs municipal responsibilities for roadway improvements. • Requests for stronger coordination with municipalities, COGs, and CTDOT, and clearer integration with local plans. • Interest in more transparent processes for submitting local project ideas.
Maintenance	Concerns about sidewalk maintenance, snow removal, and year-round usability of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
Amenities	Requests for additional bike racks, secure parking, lockers, lighting, signage, and wayfinding.
Data & Tools	• Requests for interactive, zoomable maps with neighborhood-level detail. • Desire for greater transparency into planning tools, analyses, and draft recommendations.

Policy & Education	• Questions about e-bike regulations, enforcement, and public education. • Interest in updated design standards (e.g., lane widths and crossings), driver education, and international best practices such as those used in the Netherlands and Denmark.
Prioritization	Support for prioritizing investments in high-density and rapidly growing areas, with an emphasis on short-trip corridors.
System Integration	Questions about how bicycle and pedestrian improvements will integrate with freight and delivery needs, transit services, and facilities such as CTfastrak and rail stations.

Focus Groups

As part of the targeted outreach for the development of the ATP, the project team hosted two virtual focus groups with residents from across Connecticut. Participants selected during Phase 2 outreach were invited to participate in the Phase 3 discussions. A summary of the Phase 3 focus group meetings is provided in **Appendix B.**

Each focus group included an open discussion of feedback gathered throughout the public engagement process, the draft plan and supporting materials, and the proposed statewide bicycle network. Participants provided thoughtful input on their transportation experiences, priorities, and interactions with CTDOT, while also offering feedback on the proposed recommendations. The discussions reinforced themes identified through broader public engagement. Key themes that emerged from the focus groups included:

Priority	Community Consensus
Create Safer State Roads	Improve safety through lower operating speeds, safer crossings, and protected bicycle and pedestrian facilities, particularly along state roads and in town centers.
Build a Connected Network	Close gaps in sidewalks, bikeways, and trails to create continuous, low-stress connections between neighborhoods, transit, schools, employment centers, and other destinations.
Improve Accountability	Simplify coordination between CTDOT and municipalities, clarify public reporting processes, and provide greater transparency on project prioritization, implementation, and progress.
Improve in Local Assistance	Provide municipalities with funding, technical assistance, and support to incorporate active transportation improvements into roadway projects and ongoing maintenance.
Strengthen Design Standards	Establish clear bicycle facility standards, and improve public understanding of active transportation policies and opportunities.

Stakeholder Engagement

The Connecticut Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board (CTBPAB)

During Phase 3, the project team presented to the CTPBAB on June 26, 2026. The presentation provided an update on the progress of the Statewide ATP, highlighting the project's transition into its final phase. It also addressed questions and feedback previously submitted by the Board, particularly related to the Context Classification System and the Future Bicycle Network.

The presentation highlighted the completion of the statewide Context Classification System. It also included refinements to the proposed Future Bicycle Network, emphasizing its role as a long-term vision for improving statewide bicycle connectivity by linking trails, activity centers, transit, and communities through key regional corridors. The network will continue to be refined through ongoing stakeholder input and coordination with regional partners.

Appendix

A. Phase 3 Open House Summary

B. Phase 3 Focus Group Summary

Appendix A

Phase 3 Open House Summary

CONNECTICUT

Active Transportation Plan

CTDOT Active Transportation Plan

Open House Summary – Round 3

May 2026

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Virtual Public Open House #1

May 19, 2026, 12 PM

Zoom Webinar

Team Attendees:

Anna Bergeron, CTDOT
Conner Whooley, HDR
Sofia Clark, HDR
Mindy Moore, HDR
Emily Baronoski, HDR
Joe Sgroi, CTDOT
Shannon Burnham, CTDOT
Shaunice Rhule, CTDOT
Chris Roberts, CTDOT
Paul Ashworth, CTDOT
Megna Cioffi, WSP

Public Attendees (71)

Open House Presentation

- Anna Bergeron, CTDOT, opened the meeting.
- Sofia Clark, HDR, went through housekeeping items including Title VI slides and Zoom instructions.
- Emily Baranoski, HDR, went through team introductions and began a 30-minute presentation.

Questions and Answers:

- **Julie Pham (Glastonbury)** – Thankful for all the work you have been doing and breaking down the groups for people who are interested in biking and who are not. Is there any infrastructure being planned to separate cyclists from pedestrians, given the increased use of E-bikes? References NYC Mayor's plan for Park Avenue.
  - **Emily** – Yes, there are a bunch of different facilities that can be considered. Ebike speed can get quite high and there is a need to separate them from peds.

Cycle tracks or separated bike lanes are separate from the roadway, but only for bicycle use.

- **Julie** shared a personal experience where she didn't hear the Ebike behind and had to quickly move herself and her dogs out of the way while on the sidewalk, but the Ebiker didn't slow or show any sign of recognizing the danger of the situation. Stressed the importance of education.
  - **Emily and Anna** discussed the new regulations on Ebikes and the Safe Routes to School Program for education.
- **Sandy Fry** – Will the CTDOT tools be available for the public to take a look at?
  - **Emily** - The tools were mainly created for CTDOT staff as a resource for making better decisions and connecting the gaps within the state.
- **Sandy Fry** - Are the open road facilities shown in the draft future network, what exists today, or desirable (low stress, baseline, etc.)?
  - **Emily** - It is aspirational – we show what exists now and what future/proposed connections and routes could be made. For a low-stress network, we tried to connect trails and off-road facilities. For the baseline, we looked at connecting those low-stress facilities. For traffic-tolerant, we looked at roads that would not be able to accommodate separated facilities, but some improvements could be made.
- **Aaron Goode** – Sorry, what is the "Regional Trails Program?" Do you mean the Rec Trails Program?
  - **Anna** – Yes, I believe these are the same program.
- **Sam Kamin** - Reiterating the Q above - is there a version of this that is zoomable? It's interesting to see the whole state, but the number of people using bikes or pedestrian travel to go from Hartford to New Haven is obviously very small. Better understanding what's happening on a more local level (in/around those short trips you mentioned) would be helpful.
- **Ned Simpson** – How do your project products relate to municipal COG POCD?
  - **Emily** - We are focusing on state roads for this project because that is what CTDOT has jurisdiction over. From there, the municipalities and COGs need to make progress on local roads. We did include them in this process and are supporting them with tools.
- **Owen Biesel** - I'm concerned that so much of the state bike network is only for the "traffic-tolerant" small percentage of the population. Is there a possibility to upgrade those to at least the baseline level?
  - **Emily** - We are looking at expanding the baseline network.

- **Patrice Carson** – We want to see if CTDOT can narrow the road (Route 6) through Bolton as they are resurfacing. We put together a shared-use path plan from Bolton Notch into Coventry along Route 44. We had a grant ready for it, and the public came out in opposition to it. It was shut down, so what do you do in this situation?
  - **Paul** – There are still engineering minimums and we are trying to make some changes to allow for more space for other users. Lane widths are going down from 12 ft to 11 ft.
- **David Sousa** - I see info on the plan goals, existing conditions, and public involvement on your website, but why is there no draft version of the report including recommendations and implementation?
  - **Emily** - We are still working on the draft plan, and part of the reason for this meeting is to collect feedback on what we have so far and include it in the draft plan. The draft document will be available on the website for review and comment later this summer or fall.
- **Ellie King** - Can you provide a little more detail about the complete streets review step of the implementation steps? I'm part of a bike/ped group working to draft a complete streets plan for my town and am trying to figure out the right way to connect with these efforts.
  - **Paul** – providing a link to the document where you can find more information about this.
- **Chris Negrini** - Also along the same lines, in general experience in local partnerships, are the Regional Councils of Governments a strong partner for this type of infrastructure planning, or do you find that individual town governments are the more enthusiastic partners?
  - **Paul** - Both are very enthusiastic and great partners in the project. We work very closely with the municipalities and COGs that actively want to participate.
- **Asim Atreya** - Are there plans to allow bike lanes on Route 6? Also, are there plans to add bike racks in town centers? There seems to be a lack of bike racks everywhere in CT.
  - **Anna** – We do have an active transportation microgrant program that allows for the purchase of bike racks. We do not cover the installation, just the racks themselves.
- **Jay Cosgrove** - Does CT DOT have a policy or statement on the use/misuse of e-bikes on state roads or DEEP trails - that is, continuing education, clear signage, consequences for abuse?

  - **Paul** - There was an update to Ebike rules last year – when, how fast, and who can ride them.
- **Christine Marques** - I noticed that the map of where planned/conceptual networks would go were mostly traffic-tolerant networks. Would this be a concern due to over half of your sample data stating that they may be more comfortable in a low-stress network? Or would these be more prevalent on local roads/trails as opposed to state roads?
  - **Emily** - The goal is to provide more low-stress network opportunities, but the majority of roads would be considered the baseline network. Many local roads are usually more conducive to shared roadway due to lower speeds. Typography and higher population density are also factors to consider and balance.
- **Chris Siwy** - In terms of amenities proposed are bike storage lockers and or secure parking areas, part of the plan, especially at commuter lots, train stations, airports etc.
  - **Anna** - Newly updated stations and new stations are including racks in the plans. We keep adding them as maintenance happens. Lockers tend to be more of an issue than anything, so we likely won't see those going in.
- **Linda Batchelder** - Will any priority be given to neighborhoods where the housing density is seeing very substantial changes to satisfy the housing shortage? Short trips via active transport could help with the new congestion problems, but there are not necessarily any facilities.
  - **Emily** - Short trip density map shows locations where there may be opportunities to get people out of cars and using active transportation.
- **Paul Chenard** - I am concerned about the robustness of bicycle transportation infrastructure on major roadways like Route 1. In some communities, the main state roadways are the only routes to get around town due to the very few roads because of the state's largely suburban-designed roadway network. Will the connections between the low-stress network and the large arterials be appropriately designed with protected bike lanes to facilitate transitions between the low-stress network to large arterials and then back to the low-stress network?
  - **Emily** - Yes, this is something we have heard a lot during this study. Many times, there are low-stress networks that just end and drop you onto the road where people are not feeling as comfortable. We are still evaluating how to correct some of these gaps with context-sensitive facilities.

- **David Clarke** - Does the ATP prioritize routes throughout the state? for example, prioritizing completing routes that are near completion with few segments left to construct versus more difficult to complete routes that are only conceptual and not yet designed?
  - **Emily** - Part of the prioritization tools is identifying and prioritizing gaps in sidewalks as well.
- **Kate Rattan** - On the Map of facilities and stress tolerance, how was stress tolerance assigned? I am seeing a median-separated highway with speeds of ~60mph posted 45mph; this was identified as a traffic-tolerant location. The speed differential makes this unsafe
  - **Emily** - The type of facility that would be designed would have to take those things into consideration.
- **Aaron Goode** - I hope this ATP will come up with new design standards for at-grade crossings along bike trails and greenways, esp. the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail. The HAWK lights and chicane gates we see, for example, on Route 70 in Cheshire are really kind of a disaster. I think we need a new design standard, e.g., using new raised crossings on FCHT in New Haven and Hamden as a model
  - **Emily** - We had heard about this crossing several times and understand the concerns. Yes, crossings are being evaluated as part of this process.
- **Robert Dickinson** - Could there be a policy where appropriate that where there is only room for a sidewalk to be constructed that the width be increased beyond the 5' standard width, maybe up to 8', in areas permitting it, so that bicycles could have an opportunity to pass pedestrians.
  - **Emily** - We will take your comment and look into the possibility of that.
- **Mary Wolfe** - I live in Manchester and would love to bike to work in Hartford. Right now, there are large chunks of the route that are on busy streets and very little to no lanes for bikes. After crossing the bridge to Hartford, the one to downtown/Founders Plaza or the one along 291, there are no trails/roadways to get to my location near Jennings Road. Are there any plans to add lanes in these areas?
  - **Paul** – all of those roads are Town roads and the network there, we do not have jurisdiction over. I do know there is a plan to continue from the Charter Oak Plaza area, but once you are on the Hartford side, we have no control.
- **Paul Chenard** - Why not take the minimum lane width to 10ft? Federal Highway allows for 10ft on arterials.

  - **Anna** - We need to work with engineering on design standards – some of this comes down from FHWA, and we would need to file for exceptions.
- **Sam Kamin** - @Paul, thanks for that, but I think what you'll find is almost everyone is interested in what's happening in their neck of the woods. We all have a hard time engaging in a state-wide plan at a state-level that doesn't reflect how people could actually use these facilities.
  - **Paul** - Thank you, Sam.
- **Aaron Goode** - In New Haven, we have been working with the group Bike Streets on their national "low-stress bike map," and we actually have a draft version that was just published. I hope the ATP can build on some of the work that has already been done in this area…
  - **Paul** – Aaron, send it over! Please provide.
- **Susan Halpern** - Bike lanes aren't feasible in busy cities. And are dangerous. Families with children can't just hop on a bike. Children have to get to school and activities.
  - **Paul** – it is not perfect everywhere and there is definitely a location-specific context that needs to be incorporated into the designs.
- **Sheila Dravis-Cosgrove** - Sharing CT Trans/Bike Laws. Towns can adopt the state 2025 laws specifically or a version. The 2025 update did not include an E-bike mph limit. Towns can adopt a mph limit. https://www.bikelaw.com/laws/connecticut/ https://www.cga.ct.gov/2025/rpt/pdf/2025-R-0107.pdf
  - **Paul** – the limits I mentioned were by classification, but you are correct that there is no speed limit for bicycles.
- **Kate Rattan** - Previously, this study team asked MPOs to comment on the Context Map - how is this being used within the draft? There were significant concerns about how developed suburban corridors and interchange areas were identified. Additionally, it is not clear how that context map would be utilized and updated.
  - **Emily** - We are currently addressing all the comments in the maps that we received from the MPOs. Once the context classification system is finalized, there shouldn't be any impacts on complete street designs.
- **Susan Halpern** - Getting off exit 7 Southbound off 95 is always congested in Stamford. Drivers get blocked in the box. Traffic through Stamford is a nightmare on 95.
  - **Emily** - Agreed.
- **Chris Negrini** - The division of labor between DEEP and DOT makes sense when it comes to the overarching purposes of each department, but when it comes to

creating an active transport network like this, it seems to create a challenge of jurisdiction over different parts of these active transport corridors. I know this is probably a legislative issue, but is there any thought given to putting projects like this under one umbrella where the ball is always in one department's / entity's court, so to speak?

  - **Paul** - That is a great suggestion. We do work very closely with DEEP, though we are two separate departments that are funded differently. We have more opportunities with our funding source being from the federal government.

- **Sheila Dravis-Cosgrove** - Advocacy 101: Active Transportation Plans provide a blueprint for residents and municipalities. Residents can ask questions at the monthly meeting of the town's elected officials. Residents can ask the town to form a bike/ped committee, how to join it, join a regional group, or form a local group. The state lets the local municipalities determine if bikes are allowed on town sidewalks.
- ***Paul Chenard** - If these are state roads, why do we need to get a Fed waiver to reduce them to 10ft?
- **Sheila Dravis-Cosgrove** - CT DEEP has not set a (e-bike or other) speed limit on Greenway Trails. Towns must make this determination.
- ***Chris Negrini** - My understanding is that sidewalks aren't really meant for bicycle traffic. Is the active transportation plan considering sidewalks as a corridor for bicycle traffic?
- ***Owen Biesel** - Are there plans for education or publicity aimed at drivers? It seems like nearly all of the serious safety concerns for cyclists and pedestrians come from the drivers of vehicles, and having higher expectations of drivers seems a crucial part of this.
- **Owen Biesel** – There are a few roads in New Haven where we have suggested to the Town that bike lanes be added, and we were told that it is a State Road, and they can't help us. Should we send this all to you folks?
  - **Anna** - We have heard that this is a confusing process several times. Every town has a designated Local Traffic Authority; they are the designated contact for the town to put in a request with CTDOT.
- **Sam Kamin** – What is the timeline for when the maps will be available online for us, a draft version of this, where we can look at our own neighborhoods?
  - **Emily** - Likely this summer, there will be a map that you can zoom into any location.

**Not all questions were answered during the session. The team will follow up with individuals to provide responses to the unanswered questions.*

Virtual Public Open House #2

May 20, 2026, 6 PM

Zoom Webinar

Team Attendees:

Anna Bergeron, CTDOT
Sofia Clark, HDR
Mindy Moore, HDR
Emily Baronoski, HDR
Joe Sgroi, CTDOT
Paul Ashworth, CTDOT
Megan Cioffi, WSP

Public Attendees (28)

Open House Presentation

- Anna Bergeron, CTDOT, opened the meeting.
- Sofia Clark, HDR, went through housekeeping items, including Title VI slides and Zoom instructions.
- Emily Baranoski, HDR, went through team introductions and began a 30-minute presentation.

Questions and Answers:

- **Dimitris Koutoumbas** - Hi, thanks for the presentation
  A) Does freight access tie in at all with the plan? A lot of times, freight elements are not considered when designing for complete streets. Freight operators can also be bicyclists and pedestrians. All motor vehicle freight operators are also pedestrians when delivering and considerations need to be taken as to how they access the curb and how they ultimately interact with other road users, such as active transportation users. Would love to talk more about. Excellent presentation. I am happy to see CTDOT take these steps. I am an Urban Planning student working on NCHRP and complete streets concepts.

  - **Paul** – Do you mean tractor-trailers and smaller delivery vehicles such as Amazon?
  - Yes, and we need to consider when freight delivery drivers drop boxes on sidewalks, and we need to consider peds in this situation.
  - **Paul** – In non-urban areas, this is less of an issue because there are usually driveways and drop areas. There is some guidance from AASHTO on this. We haven't addressed this specifically in this study, but it does highlight the complexity of active transportation and the competing interests of users.
  - **Mindy** – This reminds me of Amazon bicycle deliveries using the bike lanes.
  - **Dimitris** – we are developing a checklist that identifies the needs and gaps – NCHRP/USDOT sponsored research.
- **Asim Atreya** – Has DOT considered expanding CT Fastrak to include a bike lane?
- **Robert Dickinson** – Comments: Suggestion for introductory statement for information meeting for sidewalk or trail project:
  All DOT Active transportation projects are done for the safety of many people.
  - When a sidewalk, side path, Multi use path is considered and built, it is for the greater good of a large number of people.
  - Abutting property owners should be consulted as to how to make the project more accommodating to them, not if project should be done. These projects are done for the safety of all.
  - Opposition reasons are many, such as not wanting to clear snow in winter, changes in appearance, concern for security when people are walking by, and loss of parking area in the existing right-of-way. These situations can be addressed in many ways, such as installing fences or plantings and or any other ways to lessen the impact, even offering abutters a one-time payment toward snow removal or partial driveway reconstruction.
  - Safety and connectivity for all are the reasons for these projects.
    - **Emily** – all of those are great points. Thank you.
- **Dimitris Koutoumbas** – Excellent maps. With what date or modeling was the one on the 2-mile catch baseline developed?
  - **Emily** - We used various resources to fill in this information.
- **Dagmar** – Car-free in Willimantic for years, used trails until they shut down for winter and then roads. I am older now with a cane and much less mobile. Using the sidewalks is a challenge for me, especially in winter. How do you address snow and snow removal in this plan?

  - **Emily** – Maintenance has become its own subsection in the document for CTDOT. Also, the prioritization tool we are developing will help DOT identify areas, including sidewalks, that need more attention or repairs throughout the state.
- **Dimitris Koutoumbas** - The misalignment between demand and access to the proposed network is significant for South Hartford.
  - Can you confirm if any facilities were considered for the Berlin Turnpike -> Maple Ave -> Main Street corridor? To provide for demand between Newington, Wethersfield and Hartford beyond the riverfront and fastrack routes.
    - **Emily** - We can take a closer look at these areas to look at these facilities.
- **Asim Atreya** - Creating wide asphalt sidewalks that can be used by both pedestrians and cyclist like the ones in Trout Brook Trail in West Hartford, should be the focus.
- **Valmira Arifi** - Are any bike lines or sidewalks planned to be added to CT 63? I always see bikers, runners, and pedestrians in both directions!
  - **Emily** – we will look into Route 63 as well.
- **Kayleigh Bohémier** - You mentioned that CT has a lot of complex topography. How much has the design team been pulling from international standards (e.g., Copenhagenize-related documents from Denmark and the Netherlands' publications)? They added bike lanes to very old routes and were able to do it so well that they are now tourist destinations for cycling. I'm worried about getting doored when I'm biking and I really find their plans to be attractive.
  - **Emily** – they are the gold standard when it comes to bicycle facilities and design. We look at all resources of documentation when considering designs.
  - **Mindy** – I am curious for more context about the area. Experimental methodology is considered and looked to for inspiration and guidance. As far as getting doored, adding a buffer between the car lane and the bike lane is one of the design considerations for addressing. Policies can also be implemented to help with this issue.
- **Kino Rose** - Has anyone considered expanding sidewalks similar to New Haven for an elevated bike lane when repaving roads for complete streets, as sometimes bike lanes can lead to right hooks when at the level of the road?
  - **Emily** – these roads would be looked at for the low-stress areas.
- **Donna Ertel** - What about electronic signs at major intersections? We have locations in Fairfield that only have them in 1 direction, especially on the Post Road. How do you request a new one?
  - **Team** – we are not familiar with this at all. Can you clarify?

  - Crosswalk signs.
  - **Mindy** – could be RRFBs. It is at the engineer's discretion when those should be added.
  - **Paul** – the hand/walk signals are standard for installation at crosswalks now.
  - **Paul** – Every town has a designated Local Traffic Authority; they are the designated contact for the town to put in a request with CTDOT.
- **Kino Rose** - For this active transportation network, similar to South Windsor (where they have bike route signs), for this new network, will we be adding signage as a way to give bikers a better idea of where they should be going?
  - Signage is one way to identify the facility, or the facility itself will clarify its use.
- **Paula Agogliati** - Hi, with the upcoming Middletown RT 9 project, has biking been considered? Portland is doing an exploration of Main Street. Will this be explored by DOT?
  - **Anna** – this project aims to eliminate the signals on Route 9 and linking downtown with new exits. I would imagine bike lanes are being considered, but if you send us an email, we can direct it to the project team working on this.
- **Valmira Arifi** - You mentioned in your answer that you will look into the CT 63 route to add bike lines/sidewalks. How can I find out the update regarding this request?
  - **Emily** - In the future active transportation map, you will be able to see this and provide comments this fall.
- **Kayleigh Bohémier** - Will there be grants or incentives for businesses to add good (ideally the U design and/or stuff for cargo bikes) bike parking facilities along the bike network?
  - (Also, re: my last question, no need to unmute … I noticed that sometimes they separated bike and car traffic as completely as possible and gave cars the longer route because they're so much faster, and everyone ended up being satisfied because the respective routes were pleasant.)
    - **Emily** - Yes, that is in regard to the Netherlands. Bike routes are faster than cars, so they get to their destinations around the same time.
    - **Anna** – described the microgrant program for purchasing bike racks – up to $5,000 for bike racks, installation not included.
- **Valmira Arifi** - In all these projects all over CT, will lighting be added to make it safer for everyone?
  - Pedestrian scale lighting will be part of the recommendations as well.

- **Kelly Matmati** - Connectivity is so important! For Bike to Work Month, I attempted to bike to work from West Hartford to Hartford and there is no safe connection between the patchwork of bike lanes. The lanes don't go where people need to go.
  - **Emily** - Yes, we have heard similar sentiments throughout this entire process. Gaps and connectivity make people feel less comfortable biking.
  - **Paul** – it is also really important to get involved in your local community/time because CTDOT only has jurisdiction over state roads.
- **Asim Atreya** - So much of infrastructure planning is tied to town zoning and planning are there plans to focus money/grants to towns willing to accept these changes in their zoning and avoid towns that will never expand on biking infrastructure? Is DOT working with zoning in any way, or is it even possible? More people would be biking or walking if zoning allowed for small grocery stores or cafes in residential neighborhoods.
  - **Paul** – At this time, we are not involved in local zoning. The only involvement that I know of is TOD transit facility parking lots. This is more of a place for local legislature to get involved.
- **Valmira Arifi** - Will speed limit change on these state roads after the bike lanes and sidewalks? Some state roads have a speed limit of 45 mph.
  - **Emily** - Yes, that is the reality that most state roads have higher speed limits. This project isn't looking at speed limits, but we will be making recommendations for traffic calming measures.

Appendix B

Phase 3 Focus Group Summary

CONNECTICUT

Active Transportation Plan

CTDOT Active Transportation Plan

Focus Group Notes

April 2026

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Focus Group Summary

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) is developing a new statewide Active Transportation Plan (ATP). The ATP will help CTDOT fulfill its mission of improving lives through transportation. As part of the ATP development, CTDOT hosted two virtual focus groups with stakeholders from across the state of Connecticut. Focus group stakeholders were selected in Phase 2 after submitting an interest form located on the project website. From there, participants were filtered to those unaffiliated with local government entities or activist groups, with the goal of having the focus group participants represent the average recreational cyclist or pedestrian. Participants selected during Phase 2 outreach were invited to participate in the Phase 3 discussions.

There were common themes across the focus group discussions; key takeaways included:

1. State Roads lag on Complete Streets and Safety

- State-owned roads were repeatedly identified as less compliant with Complete Streets principles than local roads, particularly in town centers.
- Higher speeds, wide travel lanes, limited crossings, and inconsistent pedestrian/bike facilities make state roads feel unsafe and unwelcoming.
- Participants stressed that CTDOT should set a stronger example, especially since state roads often function as main streets.

2. Speed, Road Design, and Enforcement Are Core Safety Problems

- Speeding on state roads is viewed as a primary, life-threatening issue, not a secondary concern.
- Road geometry (wide lanes, long straight segments) often encourages speeding, regardless of posted limits.
- Participants emphasized that speed limit signs alone are ineffective; physical design treatments (road diets, speed tables, curb extensions, lane narrowing) are necessary.
- There is strong support for demonstration projects to test safety treatments before making permanent investments.

3. Fragmented Responsibility and Poor Public Clarity

- Many people do not know whether a road is state or town-owned, leading to confusion, frustration, and dropped requests.
- Relying on individuals to contact CTDOT directly was widely seen as ineffective.
- Strong preference emerged for a "one-stop" municipal interface, where towns collect public input and coordinate with CTDOT through Local Traffic Authorities (LTAs).
- While channels exist (comment forms, district contacts), they are not widely understood or consistently used.

4. Network Gaps and Lack of Continuity

- A major pain point is the start and stop nature of sidewalks, bike lanes, sharrows, and trails, especially across town boundaries.
- Gaps often arise because:
- Facilities are not mandated (especially bike facilities)
- Adjacent towns have different priorities
- Projects are scoped narrowly rather than as connected systems
- Participants care less about individual segments and more about continuous, low-stress networks that actually get people where they need to go.

5. Sharrows and Facility Typologies Are Mistrusted

- Sharrows were widely criticized as inadequate, confusing, and often misused, especially on higher-speed routes.
- Many participants, especially parents and aging riders, do not view sharrows as a true facility.
- The distinction between "traffic-tolerant" and "baseline" networks felt too subtle to be meaningful for real-world comfort.
- There is strong interest in:
  - Clearer facility standards
  - Maps of existing facilities, not just planned ones

6. Follow-Through and Accountability Are Lacking

- A recurring frustration is that plans, studies, and conceptual designs often do not result in construction.
- Participants want better:
  - Transparency on project status
  - Tracking of planned vs. delivered improvements
  - Accountability when safety recommendations are not implemented

7. Multimodal Connectivity and First/Last Mile Gaps

- Strong agreement that biking and walking must connect to transit, especially for commuting.
- First and last mile gaps, often on local roads, are major barriers.
- State trails have great potential but are limited by:
  - Restricted hours (sunrise/sunset)
  - Poor access design at crossings and parking lots
- Participants emphasized that transportation cycling is not recreational cycling, and policies should reflect that difference.

8. Municipal Capacity and Funding Constraints

- Municipalities are expected to drive many improvements, but often lack funding, staff, and technical support.
- Even when CTDOT is willing to retrofit roads, maintenance responsibilities and local buy-in can be obstacles.
- Repaving projects are highlighted as critical leverage points, but towns must proactively engage, which not all are able to do.

9. Education and Culture Gaps

- There is a perceived gap in Complete Streets and Vision Zero understanding, especially among:
  - Maintenance crews
  - Contractors (e.g., line stripers)
  - Some district-level staff
- Training is currently planner/engineer focused, and not mandatory for frontline workers, leading to inconsistent implementation.
- Participants also noted a broader loss of bike education, especially among younger generations now entering adulthood.

The following are the reports from each of the two focus groups. These will be used to inform the final recommendations for the CTDOT ATP.

Focus Group #1

April 28, 2026, 12-1 PM

Attendees:	Project Team	Focus Group
	Paul Ashworth, CTDOT	Alex Petre
	Anna Bergeron, CTDOT	Andrew Lopez, New London
	Shanice Rhule, CTDOT	Andy Greenawalt
	Chris Roberts, CTDOT	Angelo, Stamford
	Sofia Clark, HDR	Nadine Horton
	Emily Baranoski, HDR	Samuel Kamin, Manchester
	Mindy Moore, HDR	
	Megan Cioffi, WSP	

The attached PowerPoint was used to guide the meeting discussion.

Open Discussion

- Andrew - New London – State-controlled roads in towns are, at least in New London's case anyway, some of the least compliant with complete streets. I would love to see state roads in NL set a better example for what biking and walking and riding public transit can look like in CT towns. It seems like the State needs to catch up with the Town on connectivity and even stormwater
- Andy – seconded the above comment and noted that more safer facilities are needed on state roads as they typically have higher speeds
- Samuel – Manchester – People don't always know what is a state road vs a town road. Often, people reach out to the Town, get told it's a state issue and then it just stops because people do not know how to contact the state.
  - Anna – noted the comment function on the website. The comms team then filters it to the correct department within CTDOT
  - Samuel – Do the municipalities use this?
  - Anna – oftentimes, municipalities have a direct contact for their district to report issues.
- Angelo – Stamford – Laid out a couple of good priorities, but I would not weigh them all equally. The driver actively breaks the law by traveling at too high speeds.

  - State Route 137 – 90 mph hit and killed two people – there are 4 to 6 wide lanes for travel and no midblock crossings.
  - Follow-through is really needed. There are always reports and conceptual designs, but then the projects disappear and are never constructed.
- Andy – having individuals reach out to the state seems destined to fail. The municipalities should be the one stop for stakeholders, and they report up to the state.
  - Paul – Every town has a local traffic authority (LTA), and they make decisions and report to the state DOT. It is mandatory for each LTA to complete training at CTDOT for all 169 municipalities.
  - Selectboards, DPW, Police Chief, etc.
- Andy – Don't spend much time on the highly tolerant, they're fine.
- Angelo – How were the conceptual or planned trails mapped out? The Merritt Parkway Conservatory folks have expressed no interest in having a trail. There are connections as far south as Westport that are in the works.
  - We got info from COGs, so we can confirm that info has already been vetted
  - We don't have a state repository, but this is something that we are trying to centralize into one database
- Andy – 2-mile issue – are there any current model towns that are truly bikeable and walkable communities?
  - This jurisdiction is just State roads, and the hope is that this will become the base, and then, local road networks can be added later. Is there one spot? Everyone is working to correct the wrongs of previous decisions that were made, and it looks different for every municipality and every state. We have some dramatic geography constraints that vary across the state.
  - Anna – A good example of complete streets and what has been done is New Britain. We are retrofitting existing roads that have been around for a long time and there is limited right of way and limited real estate. Also, if we put it in, the municipality might be responsible for maintenance – so the conversation is always ongoing.
  - Andy – only the brave are out there risking their lives, like me, until all these connections finally come to fruition.
  - Paul – the towns that are doing this already usually reach out to us and tell us what they want on the state roads in their area.
- Angelo – Is this map publicly available?

  - Emily – in the process of finalizing the document, it will be made available. This is just a draft format for today's purposes.
  - Angelo – how are the network types determined?
  - Emily – the facility differs based on the volume and speed of traffic in the area.
  - Angelo - The line between traffic-tolerant and baseline – there is a large difference. Sharrows are very disappointing when I go to bike with my kids.
  - Emily – it sounds like an existing facilities map would be helpful for you in this case.
  - Mindy – Sharrows were originally intended to be used on low-speed streets where bikes and cars are intended to be the same speed (20 mph or less). They are being misused across the country and are not really considered a bike facility.
- Andy – to the degree that you have sharrows going through town centers, where speed limits are reduced, can we create pressures on the cars to make them want to use other routes?
  - Emily – speed limits are only followed by some drivers. Other measures, such as physical treatments, can help reduce speeds by forcing drivers to slow down. There are some "Main Street Design Guides" effective in some areas of CT.
  - Andy – Is there some analysis of what treatments work and what doesn't within this context?
  - Emily – CTDOT now allows for demonstration projects where we can evaluate before and after treatments to test out ideas without the large investment of a permanent project.
  - Anna – There are some restrictions we have for certain areas as far as demonstration projects
  - Andy – road geometry sometimes begs for cars to go faster instead of slowing down
  - Emily – road design guidelines based on the context of each location are coming
- Angelo – Network continuity – pretty common on CTDOT roads where sidewalks start and stop again or sharrows/bike lanes start and stop, and there are gaps. Are these malleable or mandated? Is CTDOT mandated to put a bike lane between the lane and the turn lane or behind the parking?
  - Emily – There are no mandates for bicycle facilities. There are requirements for sidewalks.

- Paul – there are advantages and disadvantages to each type of facility, and every location has its own context
- Anna – sometimes one town wants something and the neighboring town does not – this sometimes causes gaps in continuity

Ran out of time – Reviewed next steps slide and encouraged the group to attend the upcoming Open Houses

Focus Group #2

April 29, 2025, 7-8 PM

Attendees:

Project Team
Anna Bergeron, CTDOT
Chris Roberts, CTDOT
Sofia Clark, HDR
Emily Baranoski, HDR
Mindy Moore, HDR
Megan Cioffi, WSP

Focus Group
Barbara Amodio
Sylvia Ounpuu, Bolton
Vanessa Liles, Bridgeport

The attached PowerPoint was used to guide the meeting discussion.

Open Discussion

- Sylvia – Priorities - Where does multi-modal fit into this? Connections to transit to and from work – first and last mile connections.
- Sylvia – End of PPT – Comfort typology – was a highly confident rider. Didn't have a car until 27. As I get older, I have seen and been in accidents, so I am moving more to the left on the chart. Speeding and road rage are very concerning for me. Just saying, so you can consider how people change over time.
  - There are many great ways to ride into Hartford, but it would be great to add facilities to the local road network, so you don't have to ride on the road for a mile or half mile just to get to the trail/bike lane.
  - State trails open at 8 AM and close at sunset, so how are you supposed to use them for transportation to and from work? We need to address the DEEP rules for usage – this is a challenge.
  - Looking at these networks through the lens of DOT, but again, it's the connections and the towns that need to create these connections. The towns have no money for this, to improve connections and make them safe.
  - Emily – this is a work in progress and the local route connections are a huge factor. Though we don't have the jurisdiction to govern those guidelines, hopefully this plan will also help the towns and local municipalities.
- Sylvia - Bolton Notch – does have a bus stop at the commuter lot and you could take the Hop River Greenway to the parking lot and catch the bus.
- Anna – Sylvia with all the development around UCONN, do you see more biking?

  - Sylvia – I don't think I am there at the right times. Cory Clarke a nurse at UCONN would be a good resource to answer this question. I do think it's more and there are a lot of scooters and E-bikes. I can share her contact information with Anna and connect you.
  - Education – we missed a generation and there is a huge group that didn't have bike education and those kids are at college now. 15 years ago riding through West Hartford, there used to be bike buses.
  - What is your jurisdiction over the train system? How do you advocate for space for bikes on trains?
    - Anna – we own the Hartford Line. Then there is MetroNorth and Amtrak. The maintenance of the stations falls to DOT. I know they are allowed on Hartford Line, but I am not sure how many are allowed – it depends on the car.
    - MetroNorth only allows 4 bikes – the doors are too thin to fit it through and you have to take the wheel off. It makes you not want to risk using the train to take your bike places (New Haven, etc.)
    - Anna will look into this and see how it works.
- Sylvia – spoke to line-stripers in Bolton Notch parking lot. I asked them if they knew what complete streets were and vision zero, and they had no idea. They are currently painting Route 6. Some areas have an 11-foot shoulder, but a lot of them don't. I think the same thing is going to happen on Route 44. Is there education about this for everyone in DOT?
  - Anna – the folks doing the actual work, maintenance crews, district offices, etc., the training isn't mandatory. It is more for the planners and engineers. We are working on trying to get into the districts to provide basic education.
  - Re-paving is not a redesign. So we are working on reaching out to the towns, saying XX road is scheduled for repaving, you have xx months to get in touch with us to make changes. It is up to the town to get in touch with us to tell us that they want to add something or change the road, via road diet, bike lane, etc.
  - Anna will look at the list of roads for this area that are on the list for maintenance this year, especially looking for Route 44 and Route 6.
- Sylvia – how are crossings being incorporated – identifying where signals are needed? Sometimes the button is on the wrong side for the rider.
  - Emily – we haven't identified specific locations for this plan, but some guidance could be included.

- Mindy – what crossing elements do you think work?
- Sylvia – speed humps, speed tables for traffic calming. Speed limit signs mean nothing. Some road painting can help to narrow lines. HAWK light systems are great, but motorists ignore those, too, and I don't think that is included in driver education. To push a button, you have to stop, so motion sensors would be preferred – we still need to verify that the motorist is going to stop. Sightlines are really important and that is a real challenge here in the States.
- Trail access design – we have parking lots at many trail heads and how the driveway interacts with the trail is very important. The driveway can't actually impede the trail. Motorists looking for the entrance are not focused on looking for the users.
- Hop River Trail Alliance has a grant to evaluate the crossings and parking along the trails. There is not enough parking space, so they park anywhere and block sightlines.

Ran out of time – Reviewed next steps slide and encouraged the group to attend the upcoming Open Houses