CAPITOL REGION EAST COAST GREENWAY STUDY

SIMSBURY — BLOOMFIELD — HARTFORD — EAST HARTFORD

Photo simulation of ECG in East Hartford by FHI Studio (IMEG)

January 2026
FINAL PLAN

Prepared for the Capitol Region Council of Governments and the Town of Bloomfield, City of Hartford, and Town of East Hartford
Prepared by FHI Studio (now IMEG), VHB, and Econsult Solutions Inc.

CRCOG CAPITOL REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

FHI studio IMEG

vhb

ESI ECONSULT SOLUTIONS INC.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to the members of various agencies, City and Town boards and commissions, organizations, residents, property owners, and universities who contributed to this effort via workshops, stakeholder meetings, and online comment. The Project Team wishes to acknowledge the following agencies who provided representation to the Advisory Committee:

- Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG)
- Town of Simsbury
- City of Hartford
- Town of East Hartford
- Town of Bloomfield
- Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT)
- Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (CT DEEP)
- National Park Service (NPS)
- East Coast Greenway Alliance (ECGA)
- Riverfront Recapture
- The iQuilt Partnership (iQuilt)
- FHI Studio (consultant team lead)
- VHB (sub-consultant / Simsbury task lead)
- E-Consult Solutions (sub-consultant)

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INTRODUCTION

Overview

This study is undertaken by the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) to identify a route alignment to close the gaps in the East Coast Greenway (ECG) between Simsbury, Bloomfield, Hartford, and East Hartford, Connecticut. The study was conducted in collaboration with the study's Advisory Committee and stakeholder coordination including the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), East Coast Greenway Alliance (ECGA), and many others.

The study area for this project encompasses a 12-mile gap in the East Coast Greenway between the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail (FCHT) in Simsbury to the Charter Oak Greenway in East Hartford.

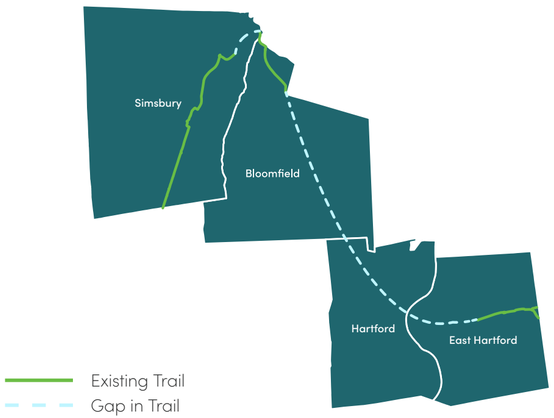
The Capitol Region East Coast Greenway Study results in one Preferred Alignment and includes conceptual design. This will allow for segments to seamlessly progress into design and construction following the conclusion of this study.

Key Objectives

Key objectives for the study include:

- Identify a Preferred Alignment to complete the gap in the East Coast Greenway.
- Provide protected routes for walking, running, and biking to support active lifestyles and transportation connections.
- Preserve open space which protects wildlife habitat and supports vegetation important for stormwater drainage and air quality.
- Create links between communities and offer alternative transportation modes.
- Develop an off-road route comfortable for all users.

Figure 1: CRECG Study Area



ECG in Connecticut

The ECG is a walking and biking route stretching 3,000 miles from Maine to Florida. The entire route is approximately 35% complete with new sections added every year. Completed sections of the ECG are formally designated, off-road trails. In the meantime, the ECGA identifies temporary on-road routing, or a "spine route", where investments are needed to plan, design, and construct protected facilities. ECGA works at the local, state, and national level to partner with communities and advance the greenway.

The ECG route in Connecticut is about 200-miles long between the New York state line at Greenwich and the Rhode Island state line at Sterling. The Connecticut route is over 50% complete with the following major components:

- The Farmington Canal Heritage Trail between New Haven and Simsbury
- The Charter Oak Greenway between East Hartford and Bolton
- The Hop River Trail between Bolton and Windham
- The Air Line Trail between Windham and Putnam
- The Quinebaug River Trail between Putnam and Moosup
- The Moosup Valley State Park Trail between Moosup and the Rhode Island state line at Sterling

The ECG on-road routing demonstrates where there are gaps in the trail between the fully protected segments. Off-road alignments are needed to improve the safety, connectivity, and enjoyment of the greenway.

There is a goal to complete approximately 150 miles of the ECG in Connecticut by 2027. This goal includes completion of the 12-mile gap included in this study, as well as other planned segments, to nearly complete the gap between New Haven, CT and Providence, RI.

ECG route in Connecticut. Sections of on-road miles have been completed between New Haven and Simsbury since publication. Map by ECGA.

Alternative vs. Alignment

This study distinguishes between the terminology alternative and alignment in the following way:

- An alternative is used to denote a specific design option at a specific location within the study area.
- The term alignment is used to note an entire route through the study area. It could include varying alternatives in different locations. This is primarily used when discussing the Preferred Alignment.

Study Area

The study area consists of two distinct gaps in the ECG route. The primary gap runs between the Bloomfield Greenway at the western bound of the Tunxis Avenue and Day Hill Road intersection in Bloomfield and the eastern bound of the Simmons Road and Nutmeg Lane intersection on the Charter Oak Greenway in East Hartford. The primary gap is the focus of this report and outlined in the following the sections:

1. ***Bloomfield:*** Northern Bloomfield connection between the Bloomfield Greenway and Bloomfield Town Center. Southern Bloomfield connection between Bloomfield Town Center and Hartford's city boundary at Tobey Road.
2. ***Hartford:*** Connection between Tobey Road and the Founders Bridge.
3. ***East Hartford:*** Connection between the Founders Bridge and the Charter Oak Greenway.

The second gap is between the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail (FCHT) near its intersection with Route 315 (Tariffville Road) in Simsbury and the intersection of Route 189 and Main Street in Tariffville Village The secondary gap is fully evaluated in a separate report, ***Town of Simsbury Recommendations Report.***

As a whole, the 12-mile gap within the study area has been analyzed to develop a single alignment of the ECG between Simsbury and East Hartford.

Existing Trails

There are four major segments of completed multi-use trail:

- Farmington Canal Heritage Trail: Approximately 7.5 miles of completed multi-use trail through Simsbury between the Avon and Granby town lines. The entire FCHT runs from New Haven, CT to Northampton, MA with remaining sections to be completed.
- Bloomfield Greenway: Approximately 2.6 miles of completed multi-use trail as of Spring 2024 between Day Hill Road in Bloomfield to Main Street in Tariffville.
- Downtown Hartford & East Hartford Trails: Approximately 3.8 miles of completed multi-use trail between Bushnell Park in Downtown Hartford and Willow Street in East Hartford. This includes completed trails within Bushnell Park, Constitution Plaza, Founders Bridge, and Great River Park.
- Charter Oak Greenway: Approximately 2.5 miles of completed multi-use trail from Simmons Road and Nutmeg Lane intersection in East Hartford and the Manchester town line.

Potential User Base

The completed ECG route would offer greater mobility and safer connections between communities by providing infrastructure for non-motorized transportation. The study area population reflects the potential user base who may access the greenway for recreational or commuting purposes.

Town Characteristics

According to the 2020 Census American Community Survey (ACS), the total study area population in 2020 was 218,151 people. Hartford, the largest city in the study area, had a population of 121,054 residents followed by East Hartford with 51,041 residents, Simsbury with 24,517 residents, and Bloomfield with 21,535 residents.

Simsbury has a predominantly white population, comprising 84% of its residents. In contrast, Bloomfield, Hartford, and East Hartford are more racially diverse. Bloomfield and Hartford have larger African American populations (at 54% in Bloomfield and 38% in Hartford). Additionally, Hartford has a significant Hispanic community making up 44% of its population.

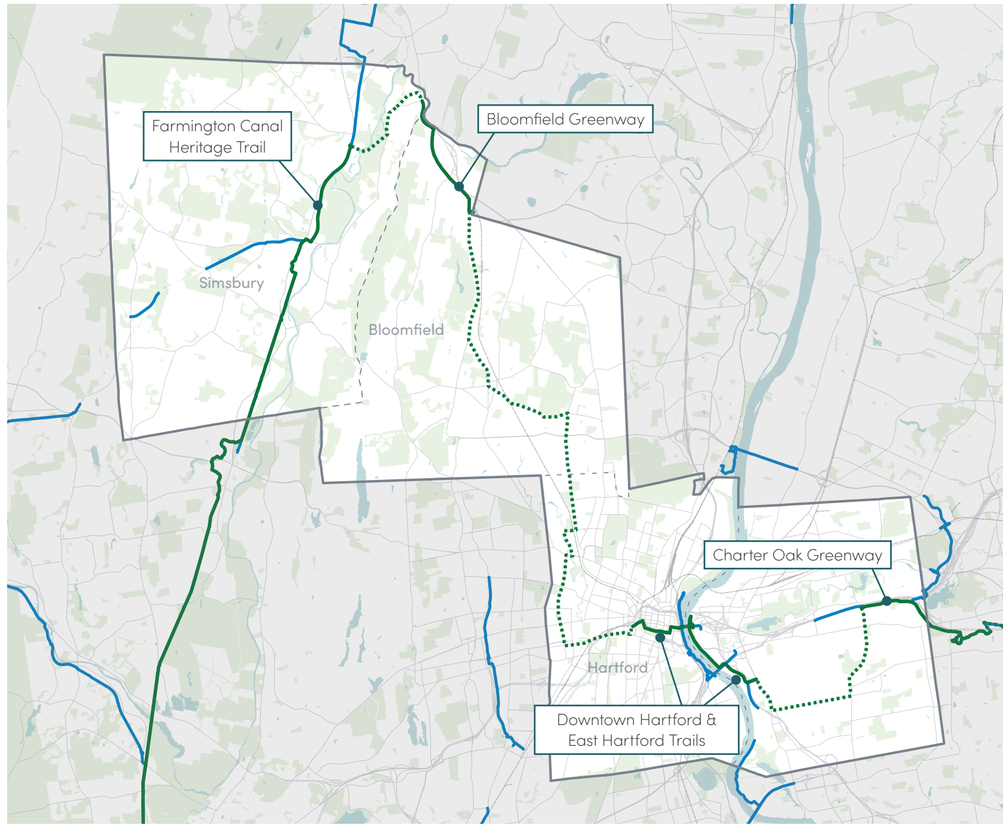
Most people are of working age (18 to 64 years), which constitutes 63% of the study area population. Hartford and East Hartford contain the larger share of working-age individuals and young children. Conversely, Simsbury and Bloomfield contain the greater proportion of older or retired residents within the study area.

Existing Trails

- Study Area
- Municipal Boundary
- Existing Trail

East Coast Greenway

- Completed
- On-road (Gap)



N 0 1.5 3 Miles

Population and Employment

Hartford and East Hartford have some of the region's highest population densities. The highest population densities include neighborhoods along Farmington Avenue and Asylum Avenue in Hartford, as well as neighborhoods adjacent to Silver Lane, Main Street, and Burnside Avenue/Tolland Street in East Hartford. Bloomfield and Simsbury have generally lower population density relative to Hartford and East Hartford.

Employment density is highest in Downtown Hartford. Other locations with high employment density include many medical and educational hubs: Hartford Hospital, Trinity College, St. Francis Hospital, University of Hartford, and more. Other high employment areas can be found on the Aetna, Cigna, and Pratt and Whitney campuses located in Hartford, Bloomfield, and East Hartford, respectively.

Low Car Ownership

According to the 2020 Census American Community Survey, Hartford has a notably high percentage of households without vehicles at 30.1%, which is higher than the state average of 8.5%. East Hartford and Bloomfield also have higher percentages of households without vehicles at respectively 10.9% and 9.9%, while Simsbury has the lowest percentage of households without vehicles at 3.4%.

Environmental Justice and Limited English Proficiency Target Areas

Neighborhoods with concentrations of minorities and/or low-income persons are considered Environmental Justice (EJ) target areas, and areas with significant numbers of persons who speak English less than very well (or not at all) are considered Limited English Proficiency (LEP) target areas. CRCOG identifies EJ and LEP populations within the study area by Census block groups to ensure special considerations for their involvement during the outreach process. The majority of the study in Bloomfield, Hartford, and East Hartford is composed of EJ Target Areas. Meanwhile, much of Hartford and East Hartford includes Spanish LEP Target Areas. Hartford also contains one Portuguese LEP Target Area. The full EJ and LEP analysis in included in ***Appendix A.***

Public Outreach Strategy

Advisory Committee

An Advisory Committee was established for purposes of the study, consisting of city/town staff and organizations directly involved in the decision making, funding, and construction process, i.e. Town Engineers and Planners, ECGA, CTDOT, CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), National Park Service (NPS), and others. All advisory committee meetings were open to the public, recorded, and posted on the CRCOG website.

Public Meetings & Pop-ups

Public meetings and pop-ups were held in each community to communicate details about the study, brainstorm ideas, and discuss comments. More detail can be found in the Preliminary Alignments and Preferred Alternative chapters.

Contact & Comments

Comments and a study contact list were open on the CRCOG website for the duration of the study. In total, there were 33 comments received and 53 people on the contact list. Two newsletters were shared with the study contact list and distributed with support from the Advisory Committee. Additionally, an interactive mapping tool was posted on the CRCOG website to review the study area and submit comments graphically.

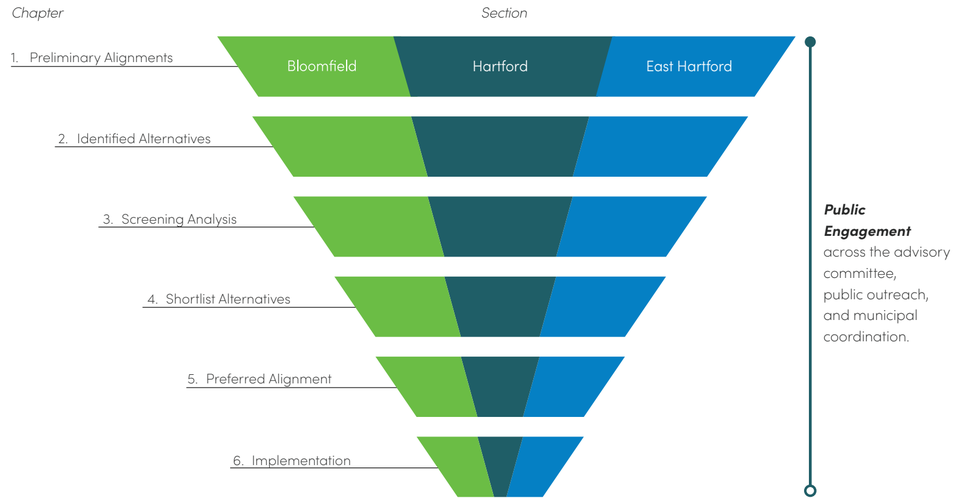
Report Organization

This report follows the study's evaluation process step-by-step for the primary gap between Bloomfield, Hartford, and East Hartford. Each chapter represents a different phase where potential alternatives were either advanced or eliminated from further evaluation. Public engagement was crucial to the process and incorporated at each step.

Alternatives for Bloomfield, Hartford, and East Hartford were examined independently from one another. Coordination with town staff and residents was done on a town-by-town basis, while the study team worked to maintain regional connectivity throughout the process. A preferred alternative was selected within each town, then the route was refined to create a continuous alignment connecting the East Coast Greenway.

The analyses of Bloomfield, Hartford, and East Hartford are detailed in separate sections within each chapter. The same methodology was applied to each town, while stakeholder coordination and existing conditions were tailored to each town's unique context.

Figure 2: Report Organization



PRELIMINARY ALIGNMENTS

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Overview

Considering the road network design, the gaps between the East Coast Greenway (ECG) and existing trails in the study area shape the general alignment needed to connect from one end of a trail to the start of another. The preliminary alignments presented in this chapter demonstrate the "range of possibilities" that the study considered and vetted with stakeholders before developing detailed alternatives for the screening analysis. This phase focuses on the study goals and community needs to discuss major opportunities or concerns early in the process.

Previous Studies

Various related studies have been conducted throughout the study area as it relates to the completion of the ECG through this area. However, this study represents the first multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional comprehensive study of ECG routing through this area. Earlier efforts evaluating potential routing alternatives of the ECG or other significant multi-use trails and other related efforts were reviewed and are summarized in this section. These efforts were incorporated into this study during the identification of potential alternatives when applicable.

Regional Studies

Greater Hartford Mobility Study (Ongoing)

The Greater Hartford Mobility Study (GHMS) is a regional, multi-modal holistic vision evaluating mobility needs across Greater Hartford.

The study was born out of several separate initiatives prior to 2019 such as the I-84 Hartford Project, CTfastrak expansion, Hartford Line Rail Corridor enhancements, I-84 / I-91 interchange improvements, and ongoing East Coast Greenway planning efforts. The GHMS was launched to ensure that the advancement of one of these projects did not interfere or conflict with other efforts.

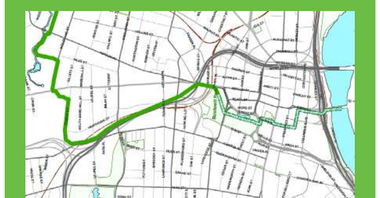
The GHMS offers potential alternatives in each of the modal focus areas: bus transit, bicycle & pedestrian infrastructure, roadway infrastructure, and our regional rail system. Proposed alternatives listed on the GHMS website as of 2023 include:

1. Bicycle & Pedestrian
    a. Griffin Line Multi-Use Trail
    b. Hartford Parks Greenway
    c. East Coast Greenway expansion
    d. CT Riverfront Greenway
    e. Trout Brook Greenway expansion
    f. Bloomfield to Windsor Greenway
2. Bus System
    a. Griffin Corridor Bus Rapid Transit Expansion
3. Rail
    a. Griffin Line passenger and freight rail improvements
    b. Upgrading freight rail to 286,000-pound weight standard

CRCOG Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan (amended 2015)

The 2015 CRCOG Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan includes recommendations about where to connect to the East Coast Greenway in Hartford, Bloomfield, and East Hartford. In Hartford, one proposal includes a partial on-road path passing through Bushnell Park and Union Station as delineated in CRCOG's 2010 I-84 Viaduct Study. In East Hartford, one proposed off-road alignment includes connecting Rentschler Field toward Route 2 through the Pratt and Whitney campus along Willow Street. Another off-road proposal aligns the trail through Rentschler Field through Brewer Street to the south.

Since the 2015 plan, the Bloomfield Greenway has been constructed along Tunxis Avenue with a southern terminus at Day Hill Road.



East Coast Greenway Trail Alignment delineated in CRCOG's I-84 Viaduct Study.

East Coast Greenway Alliance Design Guidelines (2023)

The Greenway Design Guide outlines methods from planning through construction and maintenance of local ECG segments. This guide emphasizes safety and accessibility measures while providing flexibility so that connections are feasible across towns with varying contexts. The design guidance covers suggested surfaces, maintenance measures, lane width, grade, intersection crossings, bridges, traffic-separated on-road facilities, and signage. The Greenway Design Guide is also a resource for previous funding examples and benchmarks for funding dependent on the level of intervention required to construct a new segment.

CRCOG Complete Streets Plan (2021)

The CRCOG Complete Streets Plan was revised in June 2021, with the vision that the Capitol Region will be connected, competitive, vibrant, and green. Its Action Plan aims to "develop a robust complete streets network linking important nodes of activity throughout the region" with goals that align with the gaps in the ECG through Bloomfield and Hartford. Another goal, "work with the state and municipalities to develop a wayfinding system for the region", highlights the need for a comprehensive wayfinding system including the range from trails, transit stops, and local destinations.

Farmington Canal Heritage Trail. Photo by ECGA.

CTDOT Active Transportation Plan (2019)

The CTDOT Active Transportation Plan was completed in January 2019 as an "action-oriented blueprint for meeting the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in Connecticut", with goals to:

- Improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety
- Enhance mobility for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Utilize resources to achieve meaningful improvements

The section on trail planning (Chapter 3: Enhancing Mobility for Pedestrians and Bicyclists) highlights the importance of closing gaps in the trail network, noting most gaps are smaller but high cost, due to factors such as design challenges or right of way issues. Notable rail trails that comprise the East Coast Greenway throughout Connecticut include the Air Line Trail North and the Hop River Trail, and longer linear trails such as the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail, Merritt Parkway Trail, and the Charter Oak Greenway. Progress is noted nearby on the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail, and as 2019, 43 percent of the 200 trail miles in Connecticut was completed, with 32 percent in progress.

The study area is indicated as a Statewide Multiuse Trail and includes connectivity to the On Road Bicycle Planning Network. Nearby state routes identified on the bicycle planning network include: Route 159 in Windsor, Route 178 in Bloomfield, Route 189 in Hartford and Bloomfield, Route 218 in Windsor, US Route 5 in East Hartford, and US Route 44 in East Hartford.

Bloomfield

Bloomfield Greenway: Cross-Town Bicycle/Pedestrian Connectivity Project (2023)

The "Bloomfield Greenway: Cross-Town Bicycle/Pedestrian Connectivity Project" is a proposed project for an uninterrupted, primarily off-road pedestrian and bicycle path with a goal of linking the town center to the Blue Hills Avenue gateway district. The proposed 2.65 mile path is intended to provide a backbone to a future active transportation network. The route would be 80% off-road and the remaining portions would use lower volume residential roads.

Bloomfield Complete Streets Master Plan (2021)

The Bloomfield Complete Streets Master Plan was completed in October 2021 by VHB. The purpose of this study was to "provide tools for the implementation of a multi-modal network of sidewalks, transit routes, and bicycle facilities that supplement the existing roadway network."

One potential on-road East Coast Greenway route is Tunxis Avenue (Route 189) between Geissler's to Blue Hills Avenue (Route 178). This residential corridor and minor arterial does not currently accommodate people walking or biking. The corridor, north of downtown, runs parallel to the Griffin Line, however, there is not an ideal analogue south of downtown.

Bloomfield Cross Town Trail Study (2017)

The Bloomfield Cross Town Trail Study was completed in 2017 by Fuss & O'Neill. The purpose of this study was an initial review of the feasibility of a paved multi-use trail within the Griffin Line freight rail system right of way, which would be part of the East Coast Greenway trail initiative. This would span from Tariffville in Simsbury through Bloomfield, all the way to Hartford.

Five different sections of the corridor are presented with reviews of potential environmental impacts such as to wetlands and floodways. The primary next step outlined in the Study is to coordinate with CTDOT regarding the political feasibility of obtaining approval to use the corridor.

Example of complete streets improvements on Blue Hills Avenue from Bloomfield Complete Streets Master Plan.

Bloomfield Avenue and Park Avenue Road Safety Audit (RSA) (2016)

As part of CTDOT's Community Connectivity Program with an emphasis on bicyclists and pedestrians, a Road Safety Audit (RSA) was completed for the intersection of Bloomfield Avenue (Route 189) and Park Avenue (Route 178) in November 2016, by CTDOT and AECOM. This intersection is located in the center of the Town, not far from the Griffin Line rail corridor.

At the time of the RSA, CTDOT was designing a potential roundabout for the study intersection. The RSA noted connecting the East Coast Greenway to the downtown area and an opportunity to connect bicycle and pedestrian facilities (in reference to the potential path along the Griffin Line). It does not appear that many of the recommendations were yet implemented (based on Nearmap aerial imagery as of September 2022).

Bloomfield Parks Master Plan (2014)

The Bloomfield Parks Master Plan was completed in May 2014 by the Town of Bloomfield Leisure Services Department, along with HH, Sasaki, and FHI Studio. The trails and connectivity section describes bicycle facility improvements recommended along an on-road portion of the East Coast Greenway route, primarily Tunxis Avenue. Longer term improvements call for expanding the greenway from Tariffville to Cottage Grove Road via the Griffin Line rail corridor.

The plan also discusses bicycling as a way to better connect the disparate parks in Bloomfield, with reference to the Plan of Conservation Development and notes the East Coast Greenway as a priority.

Town of Bloomfield Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) (ongoing)

The Town of Bloomfield last completed a Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) in August of 2012, adopted as a legal document by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission (TPZ). The 2025-2035 Plan update process was initiated in October of 2022 and will be completed in 2025. The POCD topics include goals for natural resources, open space, local environment and streetscapes, and transportation, amongst others.

Hartford

Hartford Complete Streets Plan (2020)

The City of Hartford's Complete Streets Plan includes the goal to "complete bicycle and pedestrian networks by connecting them to each other, to transit, and to other important destinations." This goal aims to increase access for households without cars and to better individuals' health through exercise and improvements to air quality as emissions from cars decrease. Planning strategies are outlined to design multi-use or bicycle pathways, and the East Coast Greenway is specifically highlighted as a trail to be developed. An example includes when the East Coast Greenway segments were incorporated into the Westbrook Village reconstruction project.

Hartford400 initiatives.

Arrowhead Gateway Small Area Plan and Corridor Study (2022)

The City of Hartford completed the Arrowhead Gateway Small Area and Corridor Study to plan for redevelopment in the neighborhood and provide multimodal transportation options enhancing connections to Hartford's municipal park system, downtown, and North Crossing.

In conjunction with Hartford400, the proposed "Hartline" connects to the Riverside Park Overpass across I-91. Additionally, a "green boulevard" is proposed along the north intersection of Main Street with planted medians and bike lanes to connect Keney Park and Keney Tower Park. There are additional bike lanes proposed on High Street and Pleasant Street and separated bike lanes on Main Street and Chapel Street.

Hartford400

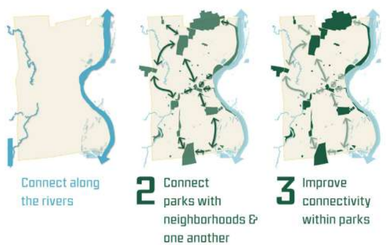
The Hartford400 coalition plans for the "environmental, economic, social, transportation, and cultural aspirations" in the region. The Move400 project focuses on shifting from car use to walking, biking, and public transportation. Move400 specifically supports the CRCOG East Coast Greenway Gap Study to determine a route between Bloomfield, Hartford, and East Hartford. The plan overall calls for increased bicycle infrastructure throughout Hartford and the Connecticut River Valley, and the ECG gap closure is highlighted as a key component for regional commuting. Increased bicycle infrastructure aligns with the overall vision of Hartford400 to promote the region as a major destination.

Hartford Bicycle Master Plan (2019)

The Hartford Bicycle Master Plan outlines the mission and methods to identify, plan, design, construct, and maintain an accessible, low stress bicycle network throughout the city. The plan evaluates best practices in bicycle facility and intersection selection to develop design guidance for Hartford.

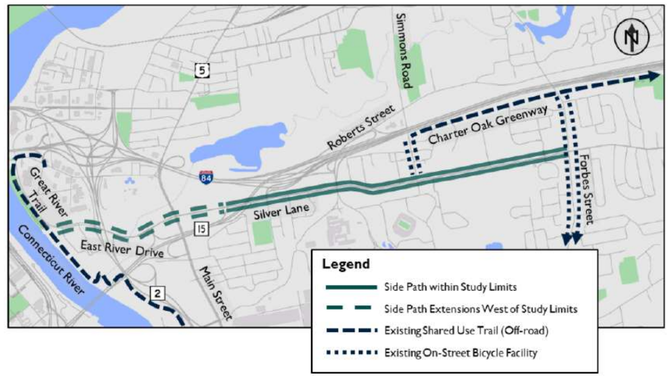
Hartford Capital City Parks Master Plan (2014)

The 2014 Capital City Parks Master Plan addresses connectivity across the Hartford regional park system to create a more accessible, sustainable, and well-maintained park network. The Plan includes design recommendations and mobility guidelines to make connections within parks, across the parks, and along the Connecticut River. The Plan proposes providing two-way bicycle lanes on park roadways. The Plan also identifies existing gaps in bicycle infrastructure along city roads where connections to parks may be made at park entrances.



Hartford Capital City Parks Master Plan connections.

Final bicyclist / multi-use facility recommendations from the Silver Lane Corridor Transportation Study.



East Hartford

Silver Lane Corridor Transportation Study (2020)

The Silver Lane Corridor Study evaluates traffic and development along Silver Lane in East Hartford. The study addresses safety, congestion, and mobility of pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users and analyzes travel demand growth and its impact along the corridor. The study includes recommendations for the projected future conditions through a complete streets approach which supports mobility for all users walking, bicycling, or riding transit of any age and ability. The study proposes implementing a road diet, providing 10-foot wide side paths, and adding transit stop amenities, as well as location specific redesigns of ramps and intersections.

Rentschler Field Development (Ongoing)

National Development began construction on a Logistics and Technology Park at Rentschler Field in March of 2023. The property will have two logistics warehouses and is located next to the Pratt & Whitney campus and stadium. The site is between Silver Lane to the north and Brewer Street to the south. The development will have impacts on traffic.

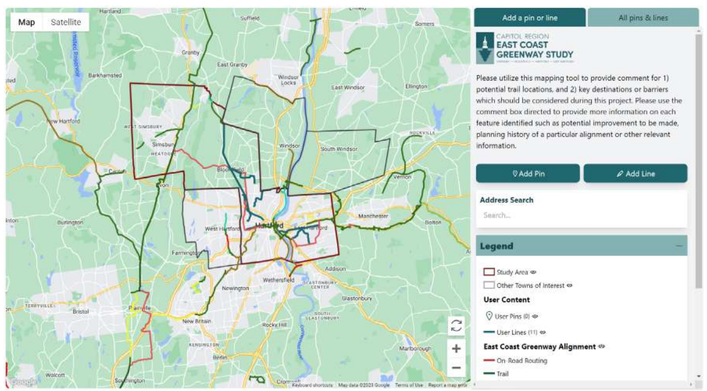
Early Outreach

Public meetings and pop-ups throughout 2023 were the first events to discuss the study across Bloomfield, Hartford, and East Hartford. The public meetings and pop-ups were used to identify potential alternatives to review and provide initial feedback on the preliminary alignments. More detailed public meeting summaries are included in ***Appendix B.*** In addition to the in-person events, comments were solicited through an online mapping tool and newsletter on the CRCOG website.

Online Mapping Tool

The online mapping tool was published on the CRCOG website and advertised through the first newsletter to provide initial feedback on potential trail locations, key destinations, and any barriers that should be considered during the project. The map included layers illustrating proposed alternatives from previous studies and existing multi-use pathways and sidepaths.

The online mapping tool received 60 comments in total. In general, commenters were concerned about safety at intersections throughout the study area. For example, several comments pertained to road stress around Parkville and downtown in Hartford. There were also several suggestions to include connections to other trails outside the study area like in the towns of West Hartford, Granby, and Windsor.



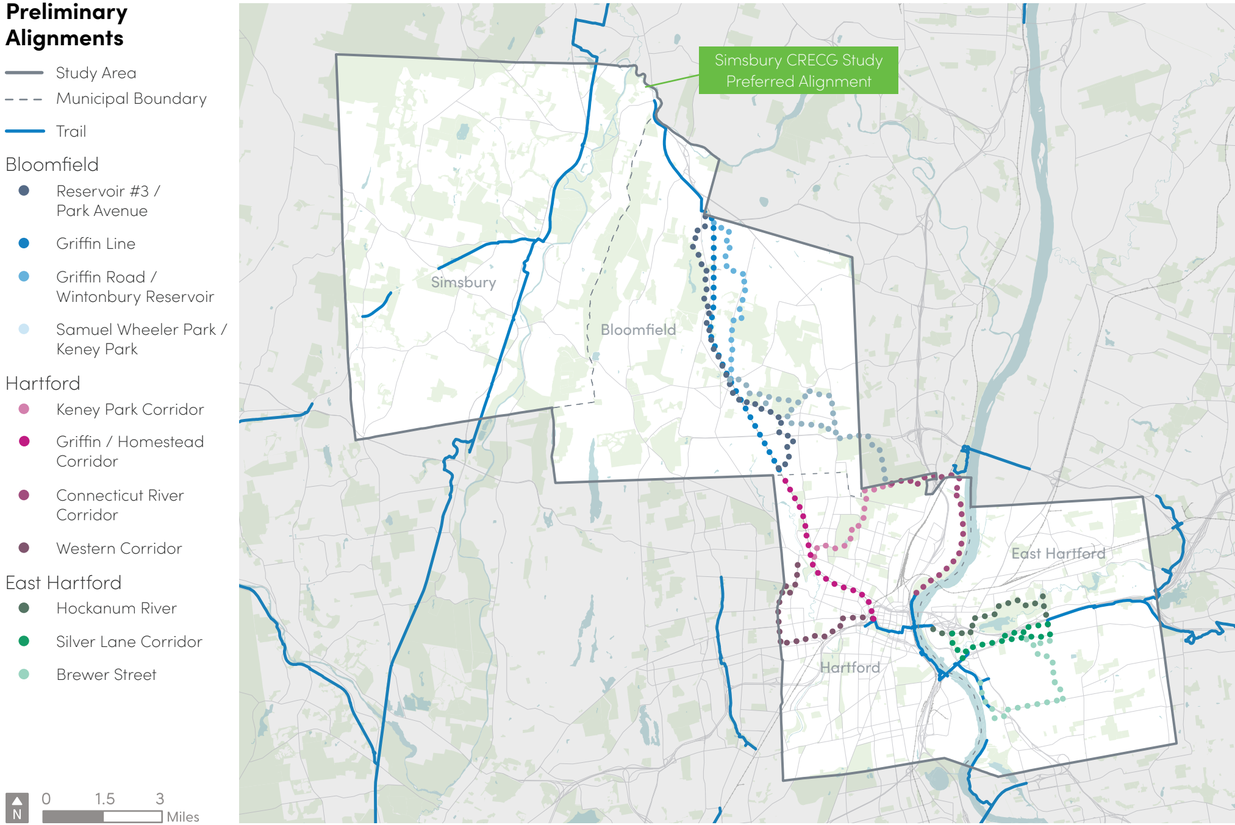
Online Mapping Board dashboard

Preliminary Alignments

Preliminary alignments were developed based on previous plans, existing trails, existing on-road bicycle facilities, and the interim East Coast Greenway route. These alignments generally represent where there are gaps within the trail network and portray potential areas where those gaps may be filled.

These alignments were presented at early public outreach events to spark ideas and facilitate conversations. The feedback from early outreach was incorporated to design the specific alignments used for further analysis described in the Identified Alternatives chapter.

For this report, the Simsbury CRECG Study's Preferred Alignment is included as a trail in concept. The Simsbury preferred alternative was endorsed by the Simsbury Board of Selectmen at a meeting on September 27, 2023.



Workshops

Three workshops were held at Bloomfield, Hartford, and East Hartford in April 2023. A brief presentation was given to introduce the study. Three initial brainstorming route concepts were presented to generate ideas. Attendees were invited to draw on maps throughout the room to illustrate their ideas for potential routes. Attendees were also asked to rank their preferences about trail types, amenities, destinations, and screening criteria by placing colored dots on foam boards to answer these questions:

- "What is your vision for the greenway?" showed images of 6 trail types and 6 amenities. Participants placed at most 2 dots to indicate their top preferences for each category.
- "Where should the greenway connect to?" listed 8 potential destinations. Participants placed at most 3 dots to indicate their top preferences.
- "What is most important to you?" outlined 9 screening criteria with brief descriptions. Participants placed at most 3 dots to indicate their top preferences.

In total, the most voted for screening criteria was off-road, followed by traffic and connectivity. With coordination from the Advisory Committee, these results were used to help determine the final screening analysis criteria. The most popular amenity along a trail was wayfinding signage. The desired destination with the most votes was parks followed by restaurants and neighborhoods. The most preferred trail type was through a park, then raised cycle track. The breakdown for each question are described town by town.

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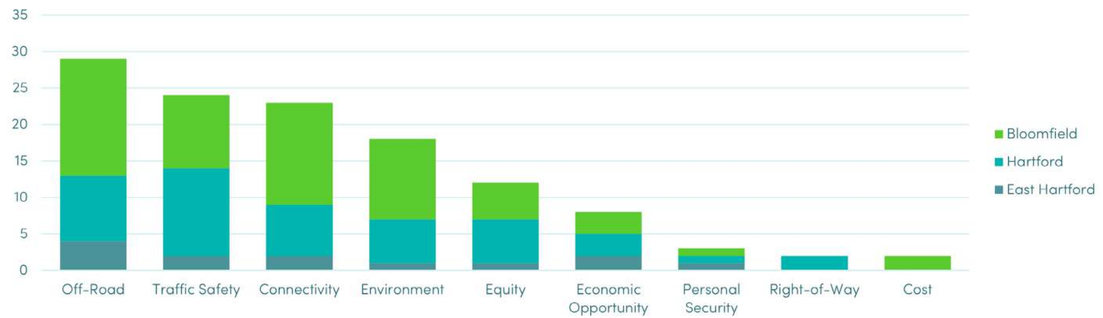
Figure 3: What is most important to you?



Bloomfield

Approximately 25 residents attended. Of the trail types and amenities shown, the most popular choices included the park-like setting for the trail, a route alongside railroad tracks, and a path within a roadway right of way. Of the potential destinations listed, the most popular choices included "restaurants and shopping centers" and "parks". Of the potential screening criteria presented, the most popular included "off road", "traffic safety", "connectivity", and "economic activity".

Hartford

Approximately 20 people attended. The most popular trail type was a raised cycle track with 10 votes. The most popular amenity was a bicycle repair station with 7 votes. The most common connection response was neighborhoods with 9 votes. The top response was traffic safety with 12 votes.

East Hartford

Approximately 12 people attended. The most popular trail types were through a park, in a utility or railroad ROW, and separated shared use path with 3 votes each. The most popular amenities were a parking lot and wayfinding signage with 3 votes each. The most common response was restaurants and shopping centers with 4 votes. The top response was off-road with 4 votes.

Figure 4: Desired Amenities

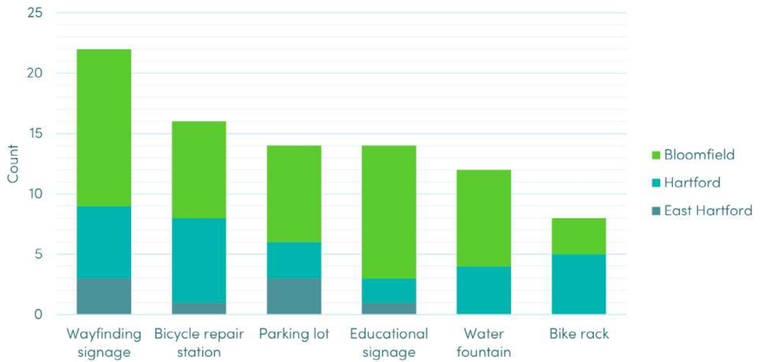
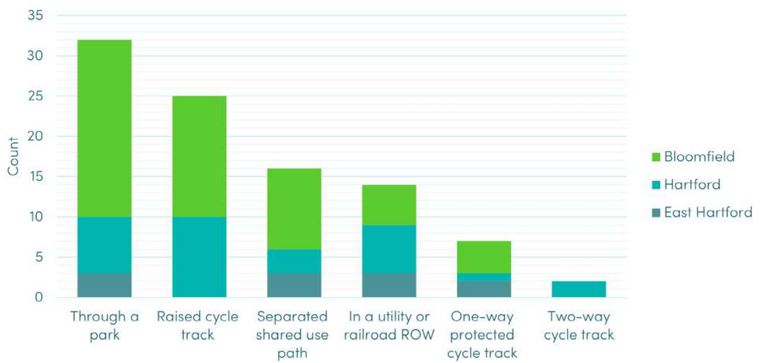


Figure 5: Preferred Trail Type



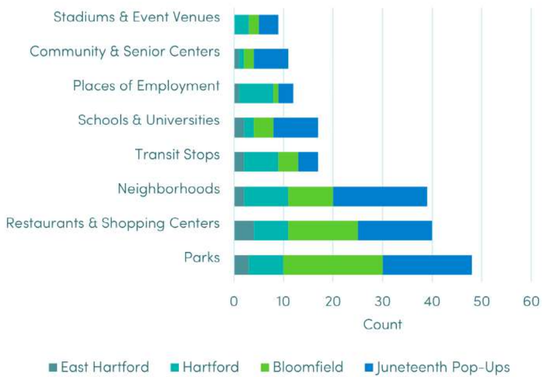
Pop-ups

The pop-ups throughout summer and fall 2023 reached more than 150 people and included:

- East Hartford Juneteenth - June 17, 2023
- Bloomfield Juneteenth - June 18, 2023
- Bloomfield Discover CT Ride - September 17, 2023
- East Hartford Latino Fest - September 23, 2023
- Domingo! Hartford Parkville - October 1, 2023

Many expressed a desire for more opportunities to walk and bike, connecting through Bloomfield Town Center and Hartford. Combined with results from the public workshops, the top destinations where the greenway should connect to included parks, restaurants and shopping centers, and neighborhoods.

Figure 6: Desired Destinations



Pop-up board at Bloomfield Juneteenth

Maps at Hartford Workshop

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IDENTIFIED ALTERNATIVES

Overview

The preliminary alignments represent the range of potential route alternatives. In practice, certain constraints may limit the feasibility of some routes, and additional considerations based on stakeholder input should be taken into account. The objective of identified alternatives is to refine the range of possibilities so that the screening analysis is more focused and evaluates only feasible options. The "identified alternatives" were selected based on existing conditions, early public engagement (see Preliminary Alignments chapter), and direct coordination with the towns and affected landowners.

Existing Conditions

Existing conditions data was gathered using GIS data (provided by the Town of Bloomfield, City of Hartford, Town of East Hartford, CRCOG, CTDOT and other statewide resources), a review of current plans and studies (see Preliminary Alignments chapter), and on-the-ground fieldwork performed by the consultant team. This work was supplemented by discussions at meetings with town staff and key stakeholders. The existing conditions reviewed generally fall within four categories: transportation facility, land use, environmental, and nearby related projects.

Bloomfield Greenway looking north along Tunxis Avenue

Bloomfield

Transportation Facility Context

The Bloomfield study area features transportation facilities for a variety of modes, and includes nearby trails, a sidewalk network, and roadways.

Trail Network

The Bloomfield Greenway is a two-mile-long shared-use path connecting Simsbury to Bloomfield along the former Connecticut Western Railroad bed, now a utility corridor. Its northern terminus connects to the Tariffville-Bloomfield Connector trail at Route 189.

The Tariffville-Bloomfield Connector was constructed adjacent to Route 189 and, since November 2023, links Tariffville Town Center to the existing Bloomfield Greenway.

The Traprock Ridge Land Conservancy (formerly the Wintonbury Land Trust) owns and operates several properties in Bloomfield that feature hiking trails. These properties are primarily on the west side of Bloomfield or just across the municipal line in West Hartford. They include the Speer Trail, the Van Otterloo Trail, the Stout Family Fields Trail, the Hawk Hill Trail and Hawk Hill White Trail, and the Seabury Wildwood Trails. (see https://www.trlandconservancy.org/what-we-protect/)

Penwood State Park is on the far western edge of Bloomfield along the Talcott Mountain Range and includes a section of Connecticut's Blue Blazed Trail system, the Metacomet. Several other hiking-only trails can be found within the park.

At the far southwest corner of Bloomfield lies Hartford Reservoir #6, operated by the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC). The reservoir area has more than 30 miles of paved and gravel roads for bicyclists and hikers, as well as other trails for foot travel only. Trails traverse both Bloomfield and West Hartford, within the main forested area and circling the reservoir itself.

Pedestrian Network

Sidewalks are present on many of Bloomfield's streets, with the greatest concentration within downtown Bloomfield, including Park Avenue and Mountain Avenue (Route 178); Tunxis Avenue and Bloomfield Avenue (Route 189); Wintonbury Avenue; Jerome Avenue; and parts of Crestview Drive. Outside of downtown, other streets with lengthy and mostly complete sidewalk networks include School Street, Prospect Street and Blue Hills Avenue.

The Bloomfield Town Green provides a small sidewalk network at the corner of Route 178 and Route 189 which also connects to the adjacent mall area in the center of town.

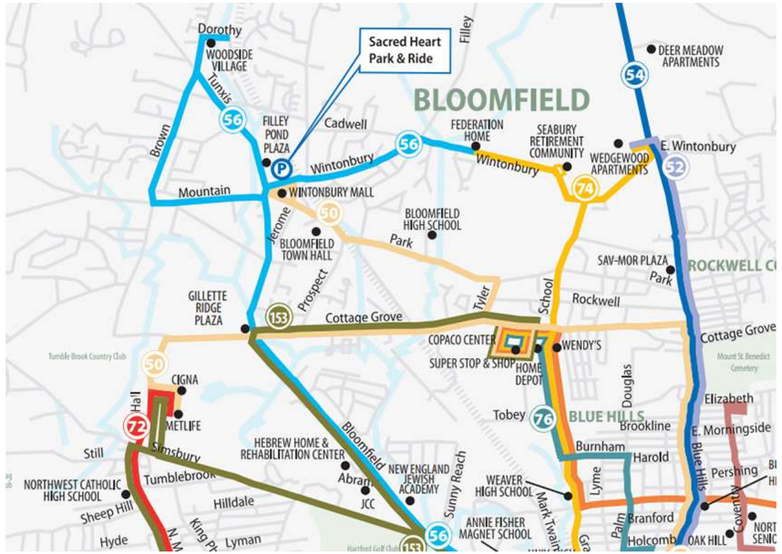
Other sidewalk networks internal to commercial and institutional properties provide sidewalk connections to the sidewalk network along public streets.

In general, due to the disconnected nature of the street network (which requires travel on the higher-classification roads), the pedestrian network relies on sidewalks on the major roadways for residents to safely travel on foot or using a mobility device.

Roadway Network

The study area includes many roadways that serve longer distance regional traffic including Route 218, Route 178, Route 187, Route 189, Wintonbury Avenue, Woodland Avenue, Park Avenue, and Jerome Avenue. All of these streets are classified as major collectors or arterials by CTDOT.

Roadways around the study area that provide key connections but are considered minor collectors include Brown Street, Gabb Road, and Filley Street.



Hartford Metro Area Bus System Map (Source: www.cttransit.com)

The street network follows a typical suburban/rural network pattern with discontinuous local street segments that move traffic to the collector roads for travel, and mostly do not connect to streets in other developments. This can make it difficult for people who are biking and walking due to the need to use the higher-volume and higher-speed roads since they cannot use local side streets to get from place to place.

Public Transit

Focused on Hartford, CTtransit runs eight bus routes into Bloomfield, including lines 50, 52, 54, 56, 74, 76, 92, and the 153. Five of the routes pass through or terminate at the Copaco Shopping Center, providing a significant bus transfer area for transit riders. Six routes provide bus service to Downtown Hartford, while the 153 connects to the University of Hartford and the CTfastrak Elmwood Station in West Hartford. The 92 runs through Windsor to Manchester, as well.

Land Use Context

The Bloomfield study area features a mix of land uses that includes commercial and industrial areas along the north and south edges of town, low density residential and open space on the west side, and somewhat higher density residential neighborhoods and civic buildings throughout central and east Bloomfield.

Commercial/Industrial

Commercial and industrial development is generally characterized by large parcels of land with shopping centers or major industrial buildings with large employment bases. They are often separated across long distances with lower-density housing development in between.

The largest commercial development space is the Copaco Shopping Center off Cottage Grove Road/ Route 218. Copaco includes multiple restaurants, a grocery store, and big-box retail. Three smaller shopping mall/plaza areas are located in the center of town, on Mountain Avenue, Park Avenue, and Tunxis Avenue. These similarly include a variety of different retail, service, and food stores. Smaller commercial developments with retail and services are scattered throughout Bloomfield.

Several significant employers have large campuses or properties in Bloomfield. These include Cigna, Metlife and Permasteelisa North America, who have campuses on the southwest side of town; and the Kaman Corporation, Cummins Vehicle Systems, Home Goods, and Pepperidge Farm, on the north side of town.

Copaco Shopping Center Sign

Housing

Housing is made up primarily of low-density single-family homes. As noted above, there are more concentrated pockets of housing on the east and south sides of town close to Hartford and Windsor. Less housing and more open space exists on the west and north sides of Bloomfield.

Multi-family housing developments can be found in different areas, but generally in the south and center areas of Bloomfield. These include Spark Bloomfield, off Bloomfield Avenue and next to the Gilette Ridge Golf Club; Heirloom Flats, in the town center between Bloomfield Avenue and Jerome Avenue; a condo/ apartment community on Bestor Lane, in the town center; Prospect Park Apartments, also in the town center; Woodside Village, off Dorothy Drive, and Mills Pond Condominiums, both north of the town center.

Downtown Bloomfield

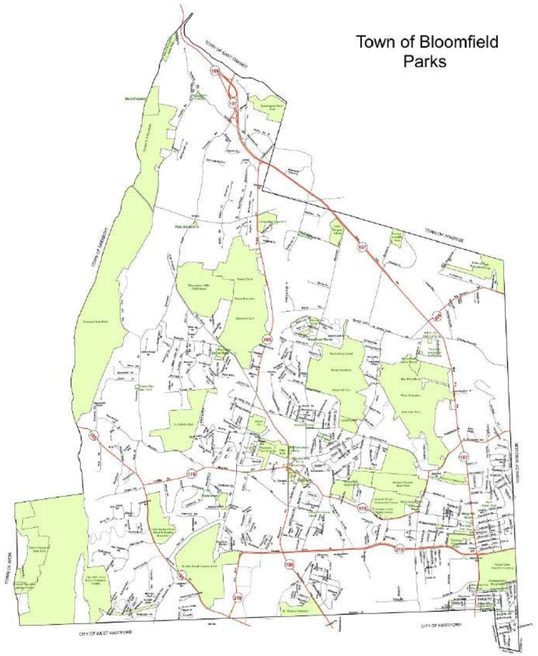
Downtown Bloomfield includes a variety of retail businesses, the Town's civic institutions such as the public library and Town Hall, along with three schools and a community center to the east. Important green spaces downtown include the Town Green and Filley Park.

The Prosser Library is currently closed for construction as it is rebuilt. As a result, the Prosser Library is temporarily being housed 1.5 miles outside of downtown at 1300 Hall Boulevard next to the Gilette Ridge Golf Club. The McMahon Wintonbury Library reopened in 2025 after being temporarily closed for construction.

Bloomfield Town Hall

Open Space

Bloomfield has more than two dozen parks, playgrounds, and fields within its boundaries. These include small green spaces such as the Town Green, golf courses, protected reservoir spaces, and large state parks such as Penwood State Park and Talcott Mountain State Park.



Town of Bloomfield Parks (Source: Town of Bloomfield)

Environmental Context

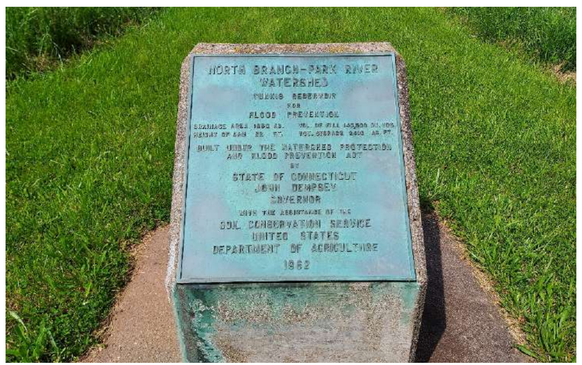
The Town of Bloomfield study area features rolling hills, forested areas, and some large tracts of fields and farmland. Although reservoir protection areas exist in Bloomfield, there are no significant surface water bodies except for the MDC Reservoir #6 in the southwest corner of the town. Bloomfield's west side is taken up by the Metacomet Ridge of trap rock that makes up Talcott Mountain and Penwood State Park. Otherwise, the Town has a relatively flat topography.

Penwood State Park

Penwood State Park, on the west side of Bloomfield, is nearly 800 acres and sits in the Talcott Mountain Range and includes a section of the Metacomet Blue Blazed Trail system. The park includes many trails, picnic areas, and wildlife.

Reservoir Sites

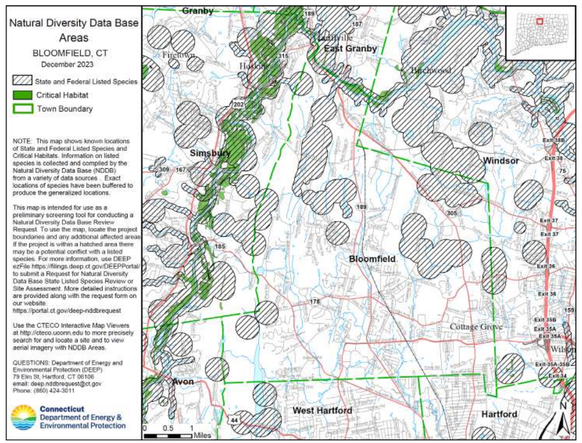
There are two reservoir sites in the town that are also recreation sites, including hiking, passive recreation, picnic areas, as well as unique aspects. Reservoir No. 2 includes a model airplane field, while Reservoir No. 3 has community gardens and tennis courts.



Stone marker commemorating the flood control system at Reservoir No. 3

Wildlife Habitat

The National Diversity Data Base (NDDB) shows known locations of State and Federal Listed Species and Critical Habitats. Mapping provided by the State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) shows these locations within the Town of Bloomfield in the figure below. State and Federal Listed Species can be found in the northern, eastern, and western areas of the town. Critical habitats are found mainly on the north edge of town by the Farmington River.



NDDB Areas in Bloomfield, CT (Source: Connecticut DEEP)

Nearby Related Projects

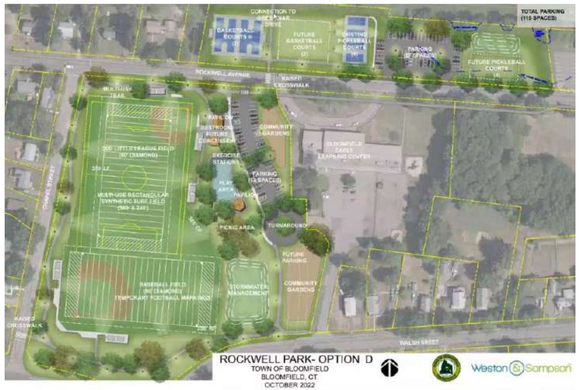
Current planning and design projects initiated by the Town of Bloomfield helped inform the assessment of existing conditions and planning for a future trail route. Projects include the potential development of a pedestrian/bicycle path along Park Avenue, and the redesign of Rockwell Park in the southeast corner of the town. Additionally, the planning team recognizes the Town's desire to develop a shared-use path along the former trolly corridor from Tyler Street to Rockwell Park and to Blue Hills Avenue using local funds for design and Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTCIP) funds for construction.

Park Avenue Path Project

As part of Bloomfield's ongoing goal to improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, the Town seeks to implement a shared use path on Park Avenue. Running from Seneca Avenue to Crestview Dr, the 10-foot wide shared use path would replace the existing sidewalk on the south side and help link the downtown area with the high school. Design work is intended to be paid for with local funding with state LOTCIP funds used for construction.

Rockwell Park Reconstruction

Currently, the Town's redesign of Rockwell Park features improved ball fields, simplifies the parking areas, creates a new play area, and provides enhanced restroom and concession facilities. As part of the project a new raised crosswalk will be added to Rockwell Avenue to improve pedestrian connections to the relocated basketball courts and the new pickleball courts on the north side of the road. The crossing would also connect to a future trail built along the former trolley corridor. During meetings with Town officials, the planning team discussed opportunities for the future East Coast Greenway route to pass through Rockwell Park along the east edge to link the trail segment along the trolley corridor with Walsh Street. To do so would require a modest reconfiguration of the current design of the parking area and community gardens to provide space for the 10'-wide paved trail. Alternatively, if a segment through Rockwell Park is not selected as part of the ECG route, a connection from the ECG to the park could be identified as a priority connection.



NDDB Areas in Bloomfield, CT (Source: Connecticut DEEP)

Griffin Line Corridor

Some identified alternatives include segments within the active Griffin Line rail corridor. As part of this study, RWT feasibility along the Griffin Line corridor was evaluated in a separate memo published in April 2024, **Griffin Line Rail-with-Trail Feasibility Study** (e.g. "Feasibility Memo"). This memo evaluates the feasibility of various RWT alternatives for the 4.4-mile extent between Garden Street in Hartford and Tobey Road in Bloomfield.

RWT would allow for a trail to coexist within the existing Griffin Line ROW in tandem with rail service. This contrasts to rail-to-trail (RTT) alternatives which would require the replacement of a railroad line with a shared-use trail. The Feasibility Memo does not evaluate RTT as it is generally accepted that the corridor could accommodate a shared-use path if the Griffin Line were to be abandoned. It should be noted that trail alternatives requiring the abandonment (railbanking and/or land banking) of the railroad would result in additional procedural requirements including federal review which could add several years to project completion.

The Feasibility Memo analyzes Griffin Line RWT alternatives following federal, state, and local design guidance for setbacks, barriers, at-grade crossings, grade-separation, and maintenance and emergency access to rail. According to the document **Rails with Trails: Best Practices and Lessons Learned** (e.g. the "RWT Guide"), published jointly by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), there are no national standards specifically for rails-with-trails, though federal requirements for specific elements of design still apply. For example, traffic control devices must comply with the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

The Feasibility Memo also details the standards and guidance provided by CTDOT and by the Connecticut General Statutes for railroads. CTDOT provided design considerations for potential trails alongside the Griffin Line and released the **Griffin Line Rail with Trail Design Guidelines** in 2023. In addition, the CTDOT Highway Design Manual (HDM) provides some considerations for design elements surrounding railroads, such as vertical clearance requirements for new bridges over railroads.

Identified Alternatives

Specific alternatives were developed to address the gaps in the ECG based on the existing conditions, along with input from the public meetings, key stakeholders, Town staff, and the Study Advisory Committee. These "identified alternatives" are the routes that were evaluated using the study's screening criteria. The study's screening analysis, screening criteria, and methodology are described later in the ***Screening Analysis*** chapter.

Each alternative is a combination of individual segments. Segments are small route sections that connect to one another. The segments vary in design, such as grade-separated crossings compared to at-grade crossings.

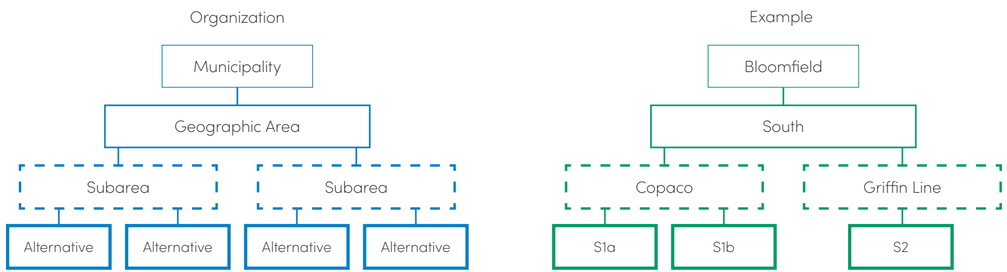
This section describes the alternatives and the variations between them. Figure 7 illustrates how the alternatives are categorized. For each municipality, the alternatives are organized by geographic area. The alternatives are further grouped by subareas where there are overlapping segments along a similar alignment.

Bloomfield

Alternatives in Bloomfield are between the Bloomfield Greenway at Day Hill Road and the town line with Hartford. The alternatives in Bloomfield are broken into two geographic areas of the North Alternatives and the South Alternatives with Park Avenue as the dividing line because of the Town's goal for the route to run through Town center. Within each area, the study resulted in identification of three primary route alternatives with additional suboptions for discrete segments. The maps on the following page illustrates the trail routes and their associated variations:

- ***North Alternatives*** start at the south end of the Bloomfield Greenway trail near the intersection of Tunxis Avenue/Route 189 and Day Hill Road and end at Park Avenue near the Griffin Line railroad corridor.
- ***South Alternatives*** start at Park Avenue near the Griffin Line railroad corridor and connect either to the University of Hartford campus or to Cottage Grove Road near the Mt. Saint Benedict Cemetery.

Figure 7: How are the alternatives categorized?



North Alternatives

Reservoir No. 3 (N1)

Alternative N1 and its associated sub-options utilize open space along the west side of Tunxis Avenue and travel through Reservoir No. 3. From the Bloomfield Greenway trailhead, Alternative N1a and N1c cross Day Hill Road to the south and enter the Griffin Line corridor in a rail-with-trail (RWT) configuration. In comparison, Alternative N1b travels south from the trailhead within Tunxis Avenue right-of-way. The alternatives converge as they turn west onto Adams Road and continue to the intersection at Boysen Drive. Turning south, the route would create a new entrance into North Branch Park River Flood Control Site 3. The trail would run through the east side of the park and along the top of the Bloomfield Reservoir dike, requiring a trail switchback towards Tunxis Avenue.

The routes diverge where Alternative N1c exits the park to the east through a power line corridor parallel to Linwood Drive. Then, N1c turns south along the Griffin Line corridor as a RWT configuration. Alternatives N1a and N1b would travel further south before exiting east onto Tunxis Avenue and running south as a shared-use path behind homes along the east side of the roadway. The trail continues south as a sidepath or shared roadway from Dorothy Drive to Wyndemere Road. At Mills Lane, the alternatives overlap once again as they continue south as a RWT configuration. The route exits the Griffin Line corridor at Wintonbury Avenue and crosses south onto Jerome Avenue following a proposed sidepath to Park Avenue via Seneca Road. The proposed Bloomfield Greenway along Park Avenue is already in design by the Town between Seneca Road and Crestview Drive.

Griffin Line North (N2)

For the entire stretch from the south terminus of the Bloomfield Greenway at Day Hill Road to Park Avenue, Alternative N2 would be a RWT configuration along the Griffin Line corridor. Like Alternatives N1a and N1c, the route would cross Day Hill Road to the south and enter the Griffin Line corridor. Alternative N2 would primarily run along the west side of the rail corridor. At Wintonbury Avenue, the trail would cross to the south and run along the east side of the rail corridor to Park Avenue.

Alternative N1 would feature a trail route along the top of the Reservoir No. 3 dike

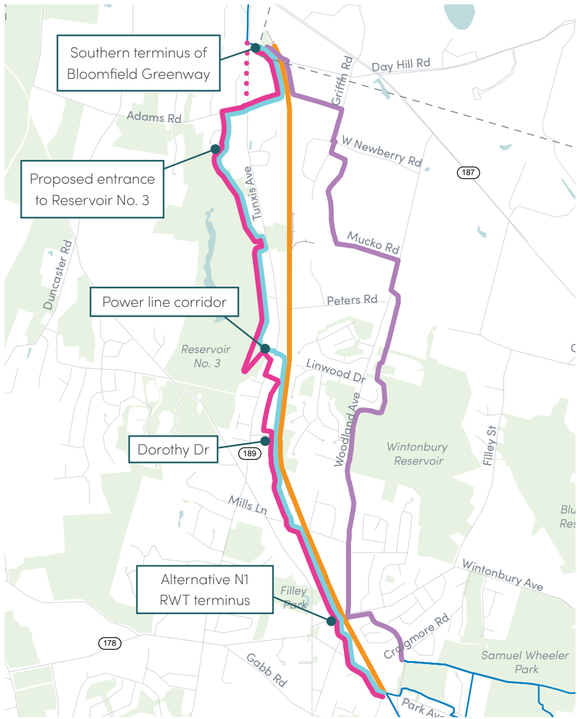
Alternative N2 would run along the Griffin Line rail corridor from end to end (photo was taken adjacent to Dorothy Drive, looking north)

From the end of the Bloomfield Greenway trailhead, Alternative N3 would head east along Day Hill Road before turning south on Griffin Road.

Wintonbury Reservoir (N3)

While Alternative N1 explores connections to the west of the Griffin Line corridor, Alternative N3 would utilize open space to the east. Similar to Alternatives N1 and N2, Alternative N3 crosses Day Hill Road to the south and enters the Griffin Line corridor. From the Griffin Line corridor, the route turns east towards Griffin Road N., then south onto a proposed sidepath within the ROW.

Between W. Newberry Road and Mucko Road, Alternative N3 would run through undeveloped land and connect south to Woodland Avenue. South of Peters Road, the route is proposed behind the homes fronting the east side of Woodland Avenue and through the North Branch Park River Flood Control Site #1, adjacent to the Wintonbury Reservoir. From there, Alternative N3 would become a sidepath within the Woodland Avenue ROW traveling south to Wintonbury Avenue. The route would turn east on Wintonbury Avenue, then south onto Crestview Drive towards Bloomfield High School and Park Avenue. Within the Bloomfield North section, this route concludes on Crestview Drive just south of Craigmore Road.



Alighting CTtransit riders at the bus stop at Copaco.

South Alternatives

Copaco Shopping Center (S1)

From the intersection of Park Avenue and the Griffin Line corridor, Alternative S1 travels east as a proposed sidepath along Park Avenue to the Crestview Drive intersection. Turning slightly to the north, Alternative S1 travels east through the southern edge of Bloomfield High School. The trail exits Bloomfield High School through private property, runs for a section along the north side Park Avenue, and crosses Carmen Arace Middle School and Bloomfield Human Services properties. Then, it would turn south onto Tyler Street and continue to Cottage Grove Road/Route 218.

The route splits where Alternative S1a travels west as a sidepath along Cottage Grove Road/Route 218, then crosses Cottage Grove Road south onto Goodman Street. Alternative S1a continues south as a trail along vacant University of Hartford property and then connects to the Griffin Line corridor as a RWT configuration. In comparison, Alternative S1b turns east onto Cottage Grove Road/Route 218 and loops around the Copaco Shopping Center to the south, following the eastern edge of an undeveloped, privately-owned parcel. At Tobey Road, Alternative S1b would turn west and connect to the Griffin Line corridor.

Griffin Line South (S2)

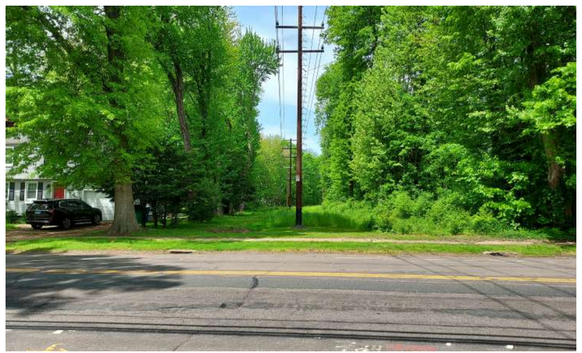
From the Park Avenue crossing to Edwards Street in Hartford, Alternative S2 would be a RWT configuration along the Griffin Line railroad corridor. As previously discussed, the trail would run along the east side of the railroad corridor, which would take advantage of the Savin Road ROW from Park Avenue to Cottage Grove Road. At Cottage Grove Road/Route 218, a new signalized or grade-separated crossing would be needed to safely accommodate users to travel south. South of the crossing, Alternative S2 would encounter significant wetlands areas and would likely require an elevated boardwalk design.

Rockwell Park (S3)

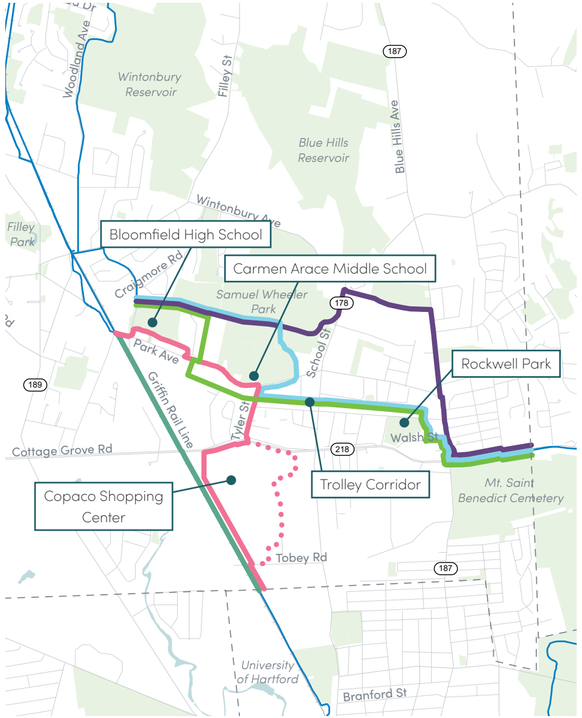
Unlike the other South Alternatives, Alternative S3 heads east towards the Windsor town line at Cottage Grove Road/Route 218. Starting south of Craigmore Road, Alternative S3 and its associated sub-options begin where Alternative N3 ends, turning east onto the northern edge of Bloomfield High School. From there, Alternative S3a travels east through Samuel Wheeler Park, curving north as it nears School Street/Route 178. The trail would cross the road and shift east along the edge of the Bloomfield Education Department parcel to Blue Hills Avenue. Alternative S3a would continue south as a sidepath along Blue Hills Avenue, then continue east onto Cottage Grove Road/Route 218 to the Windsor town line.

After passing the high school, Alternative S3b would instead turn south through private property near Bloomfield High School, cross Park Avenue, and connect to a former trolley corridor. The trail travels east along the trolley corridor towards Rockwell Park. Alternative S3c is similar to S3b, but instead of turning south through private property, it heads south at the Carmen Arace Middle School and loops around the Bloomfield Human Services building. Alternative S3c would link to the trolley corridor via Tyler Street. Leveraging the current redesign of Rockwell Park, Alternatives S3b and S3c pass through the park to Walsh Street and turn south onto the proposed sidepath along Blue Hills Avenue and Cottage Grove Road/Route 218.

View of Blue Hills Avenue at Rockwell Avenue looking south; Alternative S3a would be incorporated as a sidepath on the east (left) side of the corridor.



View of Trolley Corridor from Tyler Street looking east.



Hartford

This section describes the identified alternatives in Hartford. Alternatives in Hartford run between the town line with Bloomfield and the Founders Bridge connecting to East Hartford. As previously discussed, a potential connection point between Hartford and Bloomfield also crosses through the Town of Windsor along Route 218 (Bloomfield Alternative S3).

The alternatives are divided into geographic areas of North, Central, and South Alternatives. The geographic areas are described below as coming south from Bloomfield:

- ***North Alternatives*** travel east along Route 218 to connect to the future Riverfront Recapture park under development. The alternatives assume utilizing the proposed trail south of Windsor Meadows State Park along the Connecticut River to reach the Riverwalk downtown.
- ***Central Alternatives*** either start at the Bloomfield town line south to the Griffin Line or at the Windsor town line south to Keney Park. The alternatives each travel towards Homestead Avenue with suboptions to reach the Founders Bridge.
- ***South Alternatives*** begin similarly to the Central Alternatives and connect to neighborhoods south of Homestead Avenue and along Prospect Avenue. The alternatives travel along West Boulevard towards the Founders Bridge.

North Alternatives

Riverwalk

Alternatives N1 and N2 begin from the Windsor town line adjacent to Mt. Saint Benedict Cemetery. The alternatives run east as a sidepath along the south side of Route 218. Adjacent to the I-291 eastbound entrance ramp, Alternative N1 turns south through a state-owned parcel towards Three Rod Road, continues along Mandina Drive through the Islamic Center of Connecticut, and turns east onto White Rock Drive. Conversely, Alternative N2 continues farther east along Route 218 and turns south onto Matianuck Avenue. N1 and N2 converge at the intersection of White Rock Drive and Matianuck Avenue. From there, both alternatives travel south to the Keney Park Windsor Avenue entrance road and turn east. The route crosses Windsor Avenue onto Meadow Road, accessing the future Riverfront Recapture park under development. It is assumed the alternatives would utilize proposed trail along the Connecticut River to the Founders Bridge.

Hartford North Alternatives

0 1 Mile

N

Study Area

Connected alternatives

N1

N2

View of Keney Park entrance from Westbourne Parkway

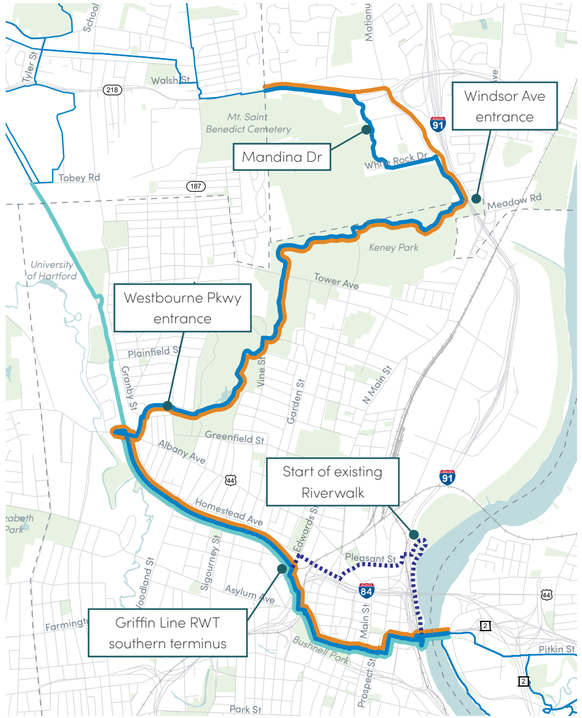
Central Alternatives

Griffin Line or Keney Park

All Central Alternatives continue from Bloomfield and travel towards Homestead Avenue. From Tobey Road in Bloomfield, Alternative C1 is a RWT configuration along the east side of the tracks to Plainfield Street. At Plainfield Street, the trail crosses to the west side of the tracks to Edwards Street. Conversely, Alternatives C2 and C3 are the same as Alternatives N1 and N2 between the Windsor town line and the Keney Park Windsor Avenue entrance road. Instead of traveling east towards the Connecticut River, Alternatives C2 and C3 turn west onto park access roads and meander south through existing paths. The trail exits Keney Park at Westbourne Parkway, where the route continues along a proposed sidepath to Albany Avenue. From the north side of Albany Avenue, Alternatives C2 and C3 cut down to the Griffin Line corridor and follow the same RWT configuration as Alternative C1.

The alternatives turn south onto Edwards Street, exiting the Griffin Line corridor, and utilize a proposed sidepath along Myrtle Street to Spruce Street, passing Union Station. The alternatives follow existing ECG routing through Bushnell Park, Gold Street, and Constitution Plaza to the Founders Bridge.

A route variation was explored from Edwards Street to the Founders Bridge. The downtown variant turns north onto Edwards Street and follows a proposed sidepath along Walnut Street and Pleasant Street, passing Dunkin Park Stadium. At the eastern end of Pleasant Street, the route passes through CTDOT property to connect with the Riverside Park Overpass and runs along the Riverwalk Trail to the Founders Bridge. The downtown variant is applicable to each alternative, meaning there are six Central Alternatives analyzed in total.



Hartford Central Alternatives

0 1 Mile

N

Study Area

Connected alternatives

C1

C2

C3

Downtown variant

View of Bushnell Park from Gold Street.

South Alternatives

Scarborough Street

From Bloomfield, the South Alternatives follow the same route to Albany Avenue as each of the Central Alternatives. Alternative S1 travels south along the Griffin Line corridor similar to Alternative C1, whereas Alternatives S2a and S2b connect from Keney Park like Alternatives C2 and C3.

At Albany Avenue, the South Alternatives all travel west to Scarborough Street and turn south along a proposed sidepath. After briefly entering Elizabeth Park, the route continues south along Prospect Avenue. Then, the proposed sidepath turns onto West Boulevard and travels east along several roadways. First, the trail runs through the southern edge of Hartford Public High School property between Sisson Avenue and Forest Street. Then, the route continues east along Hawthorn Street and turns north onto Sigourney Street. The sidepath turns east once again onto the south side of Farmington Avenue. From Bushnell Park, the South Alternatives follow the same route as the Central Alternatives, utilizing existing ECG routing to Gold Street, Constitution Plaza, and the Founders Bridge.

Hartford South Alternatives

0 1 Mile

N

- Study Area
- Connected alternatives
- S1
- S2a
- S2b

East Hartford

The following section provides an overview of the identified alternatives in East Hartford. Alternatives in East Hartford begin at the Founders Bridge and connect to the Charter Oak Greenway at Simmons Road. In total, there were 16 alternatives identified. Alternatives are divided into three geographic areas:

- ***North alternatives*** prioritize following the Hockanum River Linear Park Trail from Central Avenue to Hillside Street before connecting to Simmons Road. The alternatives assume the existing Hockanum River Linear Park trail would be upgraded.
- ***Central alternatives*** are primarily along Silver Lane. There are variations in how the alternatives connect the Founders Bridge to Silver Lane and the Charter Oak Greenway.
- ***South alternatives*** start at the riverfront and connect to Brewer Street. Each of the alternatives would enter the Pratt & Whitney campus and follow through Rentschler Field to reach Simmons Road.

North Alternatives

Hockanum River

Alternative N1 exits the Founders Bridge onto a proposed sidepath along Pitkin Street and Main Street. The route crosses onto on the east side of the street and travels north towards Central Avenue. In comparison, Alternative N2 exits the Founders Bridge via a ramp to the riverfront trail. After crossing the Hockanum River to the south, Alternative N2 turns east and extends the existing trail through a Route 15 access road. The path follows the Route 15 southbound entrance ramp north to East River Drive. From there, Alternative N2 travels east via a proposed sidepath and turns north onto the east side of Main Street, converging with Alternative N1. Both alternatives continue on Central Avenue and lead to a trail through Hockanum River Linear Park with segments along the Elm Street Trail and Martin Park Trail. Segments along the trail would require repairs to existing bridges and boardwalks, as well as surface upgrades to be suitable for bicycling. The route emerges at Hillside Street and connects via a proposed sidepath to the Charter Oak Greenway at Simmons Road.

East Hartford North Alternatives

0 0.75 Miles

N

- Study Area
- Connected alternatives
- N1
- N2

Central Alternatives

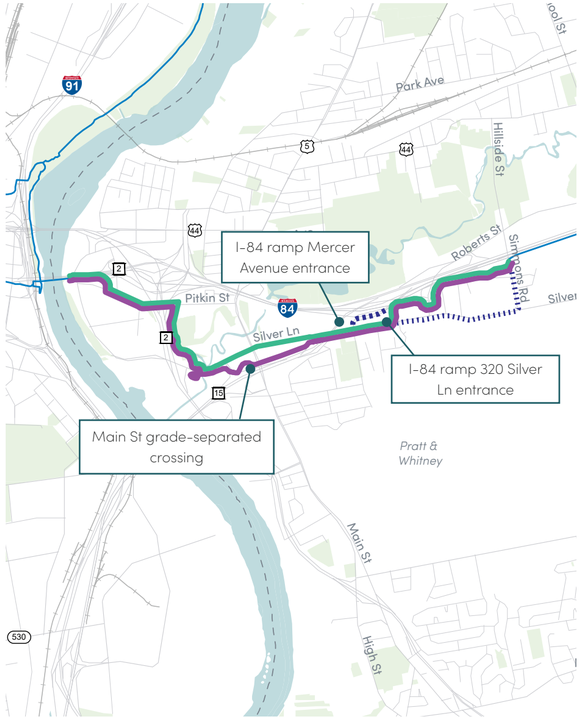
Route 2

A notable difference among the Central Alternatives involves the route between the Founders Bridge and Silver Lane. To support this connection, there are six alternatives that utilize a proposed trail adjacent to Route 2 between Pitkin Street and East River Drive/Silver Lane. To the right, the map illustrates Alternatives C1 and C4 to exemplify the primary alignment of this subarea. The remaining four alternatives are mix-and-match options across the variants, meaning the dashed lines shown are applicable to all alternatives.

From the Founders Bridge, the route begins the same way as Alternative N1. Along Pitkin Street, the trail instead turns south adjacent to the Route 2 northbound exit ramp. The trail continues through an underpass below East River Drive and climbs to south side of the street. Traveling east, there are two options to cross Main Street. Alternative C1 represents an at-grade crossing east onto Silver Lane. In comparison, Alternative C4 illustrates a grade-separated design that follows the Route 15 southbound exit and entrance ramps to Silver Lane. All alternatives travel east along the south side of Silver Lane via a proposed sidepath.

At 320 Silver Lane, the route crosses the street north through a vacant, private property owned by Pratt & Whitney. The trail travels to the northern edge of the parcel and turns east within the I-84 ROW, following the eastbound exit ramp behind the properties fronting Silver Lane. The trail would require a section of boardwalk to accommodate grade change along the highway embankment and to avoid wetland areas. Then, the route crosses Roberts Street using a grade-separated crossing. On the east side of Roberts Street, the trail routes north along the I-84 eastbound entrance ramp behind properties fronting Clement Road. The route continues east along Clement Road as either a sidepath or protected on-road facility, crossing Simmons Road and connecting to the Charter Oak Greenway.

Using the I-84 variant, the route turns north from Silver Lane at the I-84 eastbound HOV ramp across from Mercer Avenue instead of 320 Silver Lane (). Conversely, the Silver Lane variant remains as a sidepath all the way to Simmons Road (). The Silver Lane variant also includes options using an at-grade () or grade-separated () crossing at East Hartford Boulevard.



East Hartford Central Alternatives - Route 2

Study Area · Connected alternatives · C1 · C4 · I-84 variant · Silver Ln variant

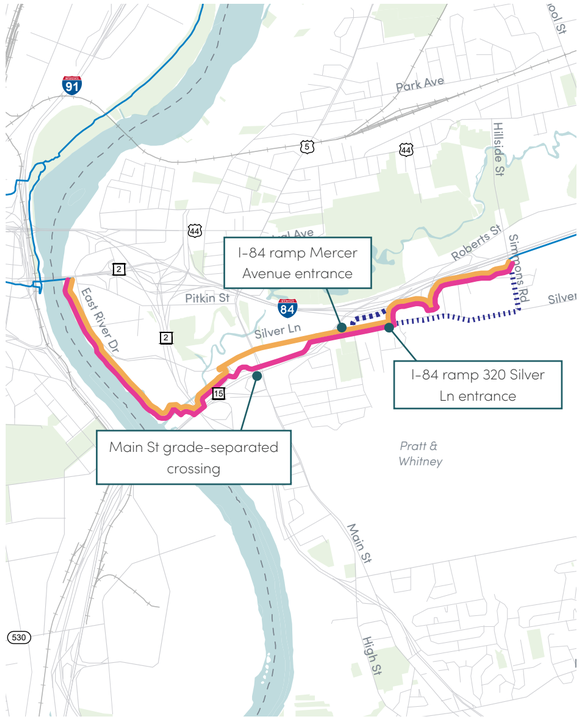
0 0.75 Miles

View of the riverfront trail just south of the Great River Park

Riverfront

There are eight alternatives that utilize the riverfront trail in East Hartford to connect to East River Drive/Silver Lane. To the right, the map illustrates Alternatives C2 and C3 as primary examples. The remaining six alternatives are mix-and-match options across the variants.

The Riverfront Alternatives exit the Founders Bridge via a ramp to the riverfront trail. Following the same path as Alternative N2, each alternative connects to a proposed sidepath on the south side of East River Drive. Traveling east, there are two options to cross Main Street. Alternative C3 represents an at-grade crossing east onto Silver Lane. In comparison, Alternative C2 illustrates a grade-separated design that follows the Route 15 southbound exit and entrance ramps to Silver Lane. All alternatives travel east along the south side of Silver Lane via a proposed sidepath and include the same route variations as the Route 2 Alternatives previously discussed.



East Hartford Central Alternatives - Riverfront

Study Area · Connected alternatives · C2 · C3 · I-84 variant · Silver Ln variant

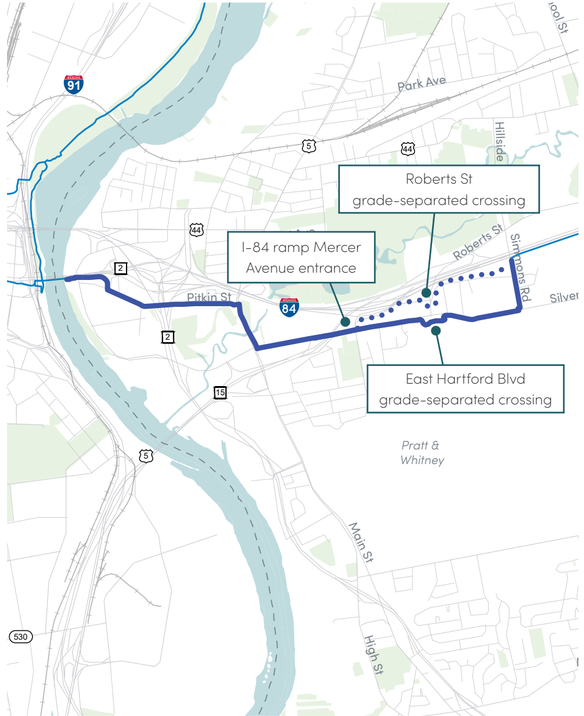
0 0.75 Miles

View of the I-84 eastbound entrance ramp from Mercer Avenue and Silver Lane

Main Street

Alternatives C15 and C16 exit the Founders Bridge onto a proposed sidepath along Pitkin Street and Main Street, similar to the Route 2 alternatives previously discussed. From Main Street, Alternative C15 turns onto the south side of Silver Lane and runs as a proposed sidepath east to Simmons Road. At East Hartford Boulevard, Alternative C15 includes a grade-separated crossing along Pratt & Whitney property to cross the nine lanes of traffic. The sidepath continues north from Silver Lane to Simmons Road and connects to the Charter Oak Greenway.

Alternative C16 varies as the proposed sidepath runs along the north side of Silver Lane between Main Street and the I-84 ramps. Alternative C16 is similar to the I-84 variant of the Route 2 and Riverfront alternatives. However, Alternative C16 turns north at the intersection of Silver Lane and Mercer Avenue instead of 320 Silver Lane. Following the I-84 eastbound HOV ramp, a trail would be constructed within the highway ROW behind private properties fronting Silver Lane. From here to Clement Road, Alternative C16 follows the same path across Roberts Street and Clement Road as previously discussed.



East Hartford Central Alternatives - Main Street

Study Area
Connected alternatives
C15
C16

0 0.75 Miles

N

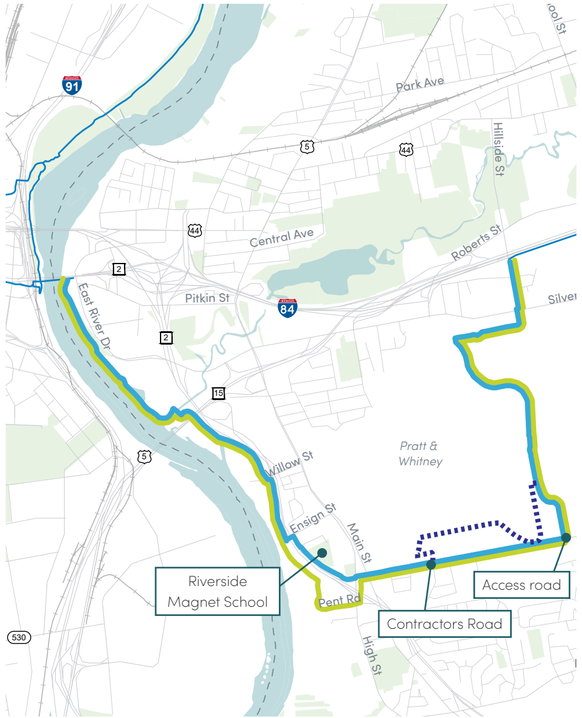
View of the sidepath at Rentschler Field from Silver Lane and Simmons Road

South Alternatives

Brewer Street

There are four alternatives South Alternatives that route around Brewer Street while connecting to the Charter Oak Greenway. To the right, the map illustrates Alternatives S1 and S3 as the key examples. The remaining two alternatives are mix-and-match options across the variants. The trail exits the Founders Bridge to the riverfront trail and follows the same path as the Riverfront Alternatives previously described. Instead of turning east at the Route 15 utility access road, the route continues south onto a proposed sidepath along the east side of Riverside Drive. The alternatives diverge where Alternatives S1 turns east onto Ensign Street until turning south onto Willowbrook Road through Riverside Magnet School property. In comparison, Alternative S2 travels further south to the intersection of Pent Road and High Street. The alternatives both travel east along Brewer Street via a proposed sidepath, then turn north through an access road to the Pratt & Whitney campus. The route would follow an existing sidepath through Rentschler Field to reach Simmons Road and the Charter Oak Greenway.

A route variation was explored to enter the Pratt & Whitney campus further west at Contractors Road and is applicable to both South Alternatives. The selected alternative would require further coordination with Pratt & Whitney.



East Hartford South Alternatives

Study Area
Connected alternatives
S1
S3
P&W variant

0 0.75 Miles

N

SCREENING ANALYSIS

Methodology

The alternatives and their variants were evaluated using screening criteria developed by the study team, Advisory Committee, CTDOT, municipal staff, and public input. In total, there were 38 alternatives screened. The screening criteria includes eight categories:

Off-road: Dedicated off-road facilities providing the most separation from traffic score more favorably.

Traffic Safety: Route alternatives with the fewest vehicular conflict points at trail crossings, intersections, and driveways score more favorably.

Connectivity: The density of nearby residential population, the proximity to town centers, and accessibility of paths provide higher scores for each alternative.

Equity: Alternatives that provide access within formally designated Environmental Justice communities score more favorably.

Environmental Impact: Alternatives with fewer impacts to natural resources such as floodplains and wetlands score more favorably.

Personal Security: Alternatives that have more access/egress points over a shorter distance score more favorably.

Right-of-way: Alternatives with fewer constructibility challenges and fewer easements on, or purchases of, private property score more favorably.

Cost: Alternatives with lower estimated construction costs score more favorably.

Outreach Insights

The April 2024 public workshops (see Preliminary Alignments chapter) presented the draft screening criteria and asked attendees, "what is most important to you?" In total, the top screening criteria was off-road, followed by traffic and connectivity. Similarly, members of the Advisory Committee separately ranked their screening criteria preferences. Based on the results, the Advisory Committee's top priority screening criteria was connectivity, followed by traffic safety, off-road, and equity.

The public workshop and Advisory Committee results were compared to establish weights of the screening criteria. The Advisory Committee's rankings were placed into three tiers based on median and distribution, while the public workshop votes were ordered and divided equally into three tiers based on counts. Overall, the public and Advisory Committee results aligned with some variation between the equity and personal security rankings. The study team combined the results to propose the screening criteria across three tiers.

Hartford April 2023 public workshop value survey

Table 1: Draft Screening Criteria

	Advisory Committee Results	Public Results
First	Connectivity	Off-Road
	Traffic Safety	Traffic Safety
	Off-Road	Connectivity
	Equity	
Second	Personal Security	Environment
	Environment	Equity
	Economic Opportunity	Economic Opportunity
Third	Cost	Personal Security
	Right-of-Way	Right-of-Way
		Cost

Note: blue text indicates criteria that varied from the Advisory Committee and public.

Screening Criteria

To measure and score the alternatives, the screening criteria tiers were weighted and assigned point values. The first tier has a maximum of 30 points, the second tier has a maximum of 20 points, and the third tier has a maximum of 10. There are also detailed criteria within each category to compile the final score as shown in Table 2.

The screening analysis presents a quantitative analysis to recommend alternatives for the ***Shortlist Evaluation***. While each alternative receives a cumulative score, the alternatives were further reviewed by the project team and stakeholders at a more detailed level to consider ongoing projects, community input, feasibility, and more. The alternatives that were advanced from the screening analysis are considered to be viable options for the final recommendation.

Economic opportunity is separately evaluated in the Shortlist Alternatives chapter to explore the population, property value, development, and land use factors contributing to the economic analysis in more detail.

Table 2: Final Screening Criteria

Categories	Criteria	Points
1. Off-Road *(30 points)*	Proportion of protected facilities	15
	Proportion of fully separated facilities (min. 50 ft from roadway)	15
2. Traffic Safety *(30 points)*	Number of driveway crossings*	10
	Number of at-grade roadway crossings*	10
	Total traffic volume of roadway crossings*	10
3. Connectivity *(30 points)*	Population within ¼ mile of trail	5
	Employment within ¼ mile of trail	5
	Parks within ¼ mile of trail	3
	Commercial areas within ¼ mile of trail	3
	Total distance*	5
	Seasonal/time of day closures	3
	Transit ridership	3
	Elevation gain*	3
4. Equity *(30 points)*	Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) data	20
	Environmental Justice (EJ) population	10
5. Environmental Impact *(20 points)*	Linear feet of trail route within 10 feet of wetlands*	7
	Linear feet of trail route within 10 feet of 100-year floodplain*	7
	Linear feet of trail route that crosses NDDB areas*	6
6. Personal Security *(10 points)*	Average distance to access/egress point*	4
	Maximum distance to access/egress point*	2
	Aesthetics	4
7. Right-of-Way *(10 points)*	Number of parcels crossed*	10
8. Cost *(10 points)*	Length of new trail to be constructed*	10
TOTAL		**170**

Notes:

(1) * indicates an inverse relationship between the criteria calculation and assigned point value. For example under Environmental Impact, fewer "linear feet of trail route within 10 feet of wetlands" corresponds to a score closer to 7.

(2) Under Equity, ETC data measures transit insecurity, environmental burden, and social, health, and climate vulnerability by census tract.

(2) Under Personal Security, "aesthetics" is a subjective score to assess a route's scenery. To demonstrate, segments adjacent to busy roadways (e.g. Route 218) score lower, while segments adjacent to natural features (e.g. Hockanum River) score higher.

(3) Under Cost, "total length to be constructed" measures segments without existing off-road facilities or previously funded projects. This means existing on-road routing is not considered.

Initial Results

The objective of the screening criteria is to highlight alternatives that achieve the high-level goals for the project and align with the ECG goals. This helps to prioritize alternatives that:

- Runs primarily as an off-road route,
- Is comfortable for trail users of all ages and abilities, especially young children,
- Maximizes recreational opportunities for nearby residents,
- Provides a high level of user comfort and is attractive,
- Connects to local parks, schools, and businesses, and;
- Focuses on environmental stewardship of the Town's open spaces.

The screening results are summarized in this section by municipality. A detailed scoring matrix is provided in the ***Appendix C***.

The screening analysis reflects the assumption that alternatives would construct protected facilities where do they not already exist. As such, the high level, conceptual design was factored during the screening process, which is evident in results like Off-Road and Right-of-Way. The alignment scores are a combination of individual segment scores. The calculations for each criteria have a mix of direct and inverse relationships between the calculated total and assigned point value.

Alternatives Snapshot

Of the six alternatives presented in Identified Alternatives, five alternatives were evaluated and scored under the screening analysis. Alternative N3 was ruled out after discussions with Town staff and CT DEEP citing the challenges of providing a trail through the North Branch Park River Flood Control Site #1 adjacent to the Wintonbury Reservoir.

Since Alternative N3 was removed from consideration, Alternative S3 was updated to directly connect with Alternatives N1 and N2. These updates are carried through the remainder of the study.

The five alternatives were also refined to choose between the sub-options initially presented. For instance, Alternatives S1a, S3a, and S3c were removed from screening. Spur trails and interim connections were considered qualitatively, separate from the screening analysis.

Alternative N1 (Reservoir No. 3)

- Day Hill Rd to Reservoir No. 3
- Tunxis Ave trail to Dorothy Ave sidepath
- Griffin Line RWT from Dorothy Ave to Wintonbury Ave
- Jerome Ave sidepath to Park Ave crossing

Alternative N2 (Griffin Line)

- Day Hill Rd to Griffin Line RWT through Park Ave crossing

Alternative S1 (Copaco)

- Park Ave sidepath to Bloomfield High School and recreation department
- Tyler St sidepath to Copaco Shopping Center and Hartford town line

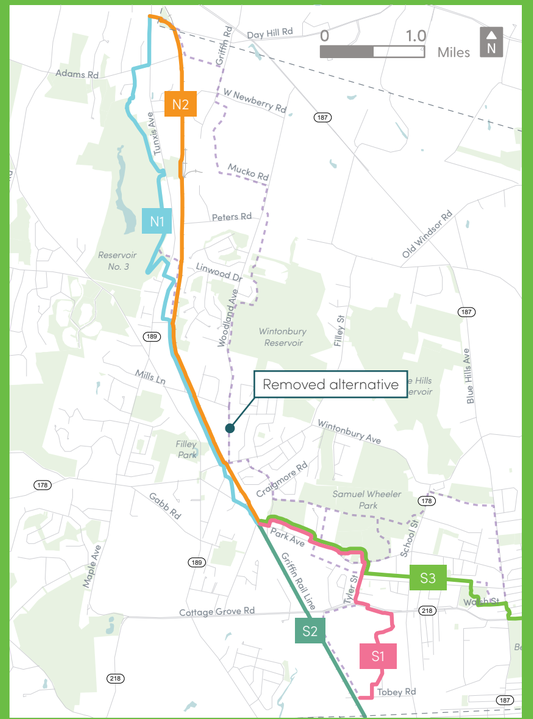
Alternative S2 (Griffin Line)

- Griffin Line RWT from Park Ave crossing to Tobey Rd

Alternative S3 (Rockwell Park)

- Park Ave sidepath to Bloomfield High School and recreation department
- Tyler St sidepath to trolley corridor
- Rockwell Park to Route 218 sidepath and Windsor town line

Figure 9: Bloomfield Alternatives for Screening Analysis



Bloomfield

A summary chart of the results for each alternative is shown in Table 3. Five alternatives were screened in Bloomfield, including two alternatives within the Bloomfield North section and three alternatives within the Bloomfield South section. The ranking of these alternatives as follows:

- Bloomfield North
  - N2 (Griffin Line) - 136.2 Points
  - N1 (Reservoir No. 3) - 128.7 Points
- Bloomfield South
  - S3 (Rockwell Park) - 106.3 Points
  - S1 (Copaco) - 105.8 Points
  - S2 (Griffin Line) - 100.7 Points

Screening Results

In the Bloomfield North section, Alternative N2 outperforms Alternative N1 in all categories except personal security and connectivity. Alternative N1 is has more on-road segments, right-of-way coordination, and environmental impact.
In the Bloomfield South section, Alternatives S1 and S3 scored higher than Alternative S2. Although Alternative S2 provides an entirely off-road trail, it does not perform as well for connectivity, equity, environmental impact, or personal security. Across the screening criteria, there is variation between Alternatives S1 and S3 even though their overall scores are similar. Alternative S3 scores highly for off-road, equity, and personal security. Meanwhile, Alternative S1 has stronger scores for traffic safety, connectivity, and cost when compared to Alternative S3.

Off-road (30 Points)

All alternatives scored well in this category. Alternative N2 scored the maximum value of 30 points as it is entirely off-road and adjacent to the Griffin Line railroad corridor. To the south, Alternative S3 received the most points as it has the highest proportion of the route fully separated from roadways. Alternative S1 scored the lowest at 8.5 points because it includes segments that are less than 50 feet from the adjacent roadway.

Traffic Safety (30 Points)

Both Alternatives N1 and N2 scored highly. Alternative S2 scored the maximum value of 30 points with no road or driveway crossings from end to end. Alternative S3 scored the lowest because it had the largest sum of ADT crossed.

Connectivity (30 Points)

Alternative S1 scored the highest in this category with 21.0 points. As each alternative was designed to connect with population, employment, and park areas, each scored relatively high with other scores ranging from 14.9 to 19.7 points.

Equity (30 Points)

Scores for each alternative were tempered because there are no formally designated Environmental Justice communities adjacent to any of the route alternatives. Scores do vary however across ETC data, where Alternatives S1 and S2 run through census tracts with lower ETC metrics than Alternative S3.

Table 3: Bloomfield Evaluation Matrix Summary

Criteria	Max. Pts	North		South		
		N1	N2	S1	S2	S3
1: Off-Road	30	23.8	30.0	23.5	24.5	26.6
2: Traffic Safety	30	26.2	27.1	15.8	30.0	9.0
3: Connectivity	30	19.7	18.4	21.0	14.8	16.3
4. Equity	30	20.0	20.0	11.1	1.1	20.0
5: Environmental Impact	20	12.7	18.0	16.1	6.0	16.6
6. Personal Security	10	8.2	2.7	6.2	4.3	7.5
7: Right-of-Way	10	8.8	10.0	5.7	10.0	5.0
8: Cost	10	9.4	10.0	6.3	10.0	5.2
TOTAL	**170**	**128.7**	**136.2**	**105.8**	**100.7**	**106.3**

Note: highlighted cell indicates the top score for each criteria

Environment (20 Points)

Alternative N2 scored the highest with 18.0 points, whereas Alternative N1 scored 12.7 points because it crosses an NDDB area. In the Bloomfield South section, Alternative S2 is adjacent wetlands and floodplains and scored the lowest at 6.0 points. Alternatives S1 and S3 have similar scores, however Alternative S1 scored slightly lower due to a small area adjacent to wetlands.

Personal Security (10 Points)

Within the Bloomfield North section, Alternative N1 scored the highest with 8.2 points. This is due to the close proximity of many access and egress points along the potential trail route, as well as the scenery through Reservoir No. 3. Alternative N2 scored the lowest because of the relative isolation of the Griffin Line rail corridor which includes few opportunities for access or egress. Of the Bloomfield South alternatives, Alternative S3 received the highest score due to the average proximity of access and egress points.

Right-of-way (10 Points)

Alternatives N2 and S2 scored the highest because there is only one landowner (CTDOT) of the rail corridor. Coordination with CTDOT and the rail operator is considered separately from the screening analysis. Alternative S1 and S3 scored much lower due to the handful of landowners that would require coordination and negotiations with to ensure a contiguous route for the trail.

Cost (10 Points)

Similarly, Alternatives N2 and S2 scored the highest due to the relative simplicity of building a potential rail adjacent to a continuous rail corridor. (Note: a potential grade-separated trail crossing over Cottage Grove Road/Route 218 was not included; if so the score for S2 would be far lower). Alternative S1 and S3 scored much lower due to the much longer linear distance each option is trying to overcome compared to the straight-line-distance.

Hartford

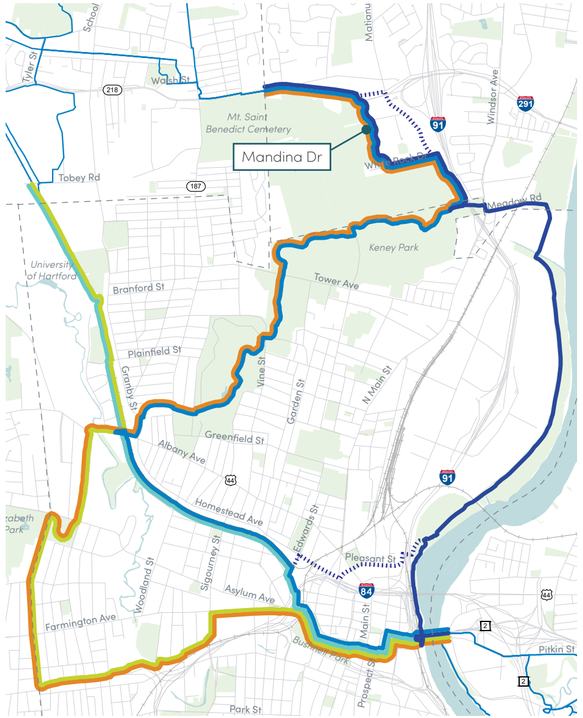
There were 11 alternatives screened within Hartford. A summary chart of the scoring results for each alternative is shown on Page 56. Scoring ranged from a high score of 125.2 for Alternative C2a to a low score of 92.4 for Alternative N2. The alternatives are ranked as follows:

Screening Results

- C2a (Keney Park) - 125.2 Points
- C1a (Griffin Line) - 120.2 Points
- C2b (Keney Park) - 116.8 Points
- C3a (Keney Park) - 115.6 Points
- C1b (Griffin Line) - 112.2 Points
- C3b (Keney Park) - 107.2 Points
- S2a (Scarborough St) - 103.9 Points
- N1 (Riverwalk) - 102.1 Points
- S1 (Scarborough St) - 101.1 Points
- S2b (Scarborough St) - 95.0 Points
- N2 (Riverwalk) - 92.4 Points

Overall, the Central Alternatives scored consistently higher than the other geographic areas. In particular, the Keney Park Alternatives are the majority of the top scores. The majority of these routes run along a separated trail as opposed to a sidepath, and many segments are completed. The Riverwalk Alternatives scored lower in connectivity, environmental impact, and personal security. The screening reflects challenges along the northern route regarding limited access/egress points and fewer connections to destinations. In comparison, the Scarborough Street Alternatives scored very low for traffic safety and cost as the routes are circuitous along many streets.

Of the route variants through Hartford, alternatives scored higher for traffic safety when traveling south from Route 218 through Mandina Drive and the Islamic Center of Connecticut as opposed to Matianuck Avenue. Alternatives also scored higher when crossing downtown Hartford through Bushnell Park to the Founders Bridge for cost and connectivity because of the existing trails and connections to transit. In addition, alternatives along the Griffin Line score better for traffic safety, while alternatives through Keney Park received high scores for connectivity and personal security.



Off-road (30 Points)

Alternative C1a scored the highest at 26.3 points in part because it had the highest proportion of trail fully separated from roadways. All other alternatives did well in this category, although the South Alternatives scored the lowest due to a lower proportion of the route fully separated from roadways. Alternative S1 received the lowest score at 22.0 points.

Traffic Safety (30 Points)

Alternative N1 scored the highest at 28.1 points with very few driveway or road crossings. Alternative S2b scored the lowest at 0.3 points as it includes at-grade crossings along heavily trafficked roads.

Connectivity (30 Points)

Alternative S1 scored the highest in this category at 24.3 points due to its year-round accessibility and access to population, employment centers, and transit. Alternative N1 scored the lowest at 8.2 points in part because of the seasonal closures due to flooding along the riverfront. Although the North Alternatives connect to parks, the Connecticut River and Route I-91 disconnect the route from population and employment centers, and transit.

Equity (30 Points)

Alternative C2b scored the highest in this category at 29.4 points because the route is located nearby Environmental Justice communities and crosses areas with high ETC metrics.

Environment (20 Points)

Alternative C1a scored the highest in this category at 14.5 points in part because the route does not cross NDDB areas like other alternatives. Alternative N2 scored the lowest at 4.2 points due to the length through the floodplain and NDDB areas along the Connecticut River.

Personal Security (10 Points)

Alternative S2a scored the highest in this category at 8.9 points due to the many egress/access points along the route. Although the North Alternatives scored highly for their scenic value, Alternative N2 scored the lowest at 3.3 points because the route has few egress/access points overall.

Table 4: Hartford Evaluation Matrix Summary

Criteria	Max. Pts	North		Central						South		
		N1	N2	C1a	C2a	C3a	C1b	C2b	C3b	S1	S2a	S2b
1: Off-Road	30	25.1	24.9	26.3	25.4	25.2	25.9	25.2	25.0	22.0	22.5	22.3
2: Traffic Safety	30	28.1	26.6	26.0	18.0	16.4	26.4	18.4	16.8	10.0	1.9	0.3
3: Connectivity	30	8.2	8.4	23.8	22.3	22.2	16.7	15.8	15.8	24.3	22.2	22.8
4. Equity	30	12.6	12.6	6.2	25.8	25.9	11.2	29.4	29.5	8.0	25.0	25.0
5: Environmental Impact	20	4.4	4.2	14.5	14.0	13.8	11.2	10.6	10.5	14.2	13.7	13.5
6. Personal Security	10	4.0	3.3	6.3	8.9	8.4	5.0	8.0	7.5	6.8	8.9	8.5
7: Right-of-Way	10	9.8	2.5	8.4	7.9	0.5	7.9	7.4	0.0	10.0	9.7	2.3
8: Cost	10	9.8	10.0	8.8	2.9	3.1	7.9	2.0	2.2	5.8	0.0	0.2
TOTAL	**170**	**102.1**	**92.4**	**120.2**	**125.2**	**115.6**	**112.2**	**116.8**	**107.2**	**101.1**	**103.9**	**95.0**

Note: highlighted cell indicates the top score for each criteria

Right-of-way (10 Points)

Alternative S1 scored the maximum value of 10 points in this category because the route can be accommodated within existing right-of-way or park paths. Alternative C3b scored the lowest with 0 points, and Alternative C3a was similarly low at 0.5 points.

Cost (10 Points)

Alternative N2 scored the maximum value of 10 points in this category. Alternative S2a scored the lowest with 0 points, and Alternative S2b was similarly low at 0.2 points.

View of Bushnell Park from Gold Street

Alternatives Snapshot

Alternative N1 (Riverwalk)

- Route 218 to Matianuck Ave
- Windsor Ave crossing to Riverfront Recapture future park
- Riverwalk to Founders Bridge

Alternative N2 (Riverwalk)

- Route 218 to Mandina Dr
- Windsor Ave crossing to Riverfront Recapture future park
- Riverwalk to Founders Bridge

Alternative C1a (Griffin Line)

- Tobey Rd to Griffin Line RWT
- Edwards St to Bushnell Park and Founders Bridge

Alternative C2a (Keney Park)

- Route 218 to Mandina Dr
- Keney Park to Westbourne Pkwy
- Albany Ave to Griffin Line RWT
- Edwards St to Bushnell Park and Founders Bridge

Alternative C3a (Keney Park)

- Route 218 to Matianuck Ave
- Keney Park to Westbourne Pkwy
- Albany Ave to Griffin Line RWT
- Edwards St to Bushnell Park and Founders Bridge

Alternative C1b (Griffin Line)

- Tobey Rd to Griffin Line RWT
- Edwards St to Riverwalk and Founders Bridge

Alternative C2b (Keney Park)

- Route 218 to Mandina Dr
- Keney Park to Westbourne Pkwy
- Albany Ave to Griffin Line RWT
- Edwards St to Riverwalk and Founders Bridge

Alternative C3b (Keney Park)

- Route 218 to Matianuck Ave
- Keney Park to Westbourne Pkwy
- Albany Ave to Griffin Line RWT
- Edwards St to Riverwalk and Founders Bridge

Alternative S1 (Scarborough St)

- Tobey Rd to Griffin Line RWT
- Scarborough St to West Blvd
- Farmington Ave to Bushnell Park and Founders Bridge

Alternative S2a (Scarborough St)

- Route 218 to Mandina Dr
- Keney Park to Westbourne Pkwy
- Scarborough St to West Blvd
- Farmington Ave to Bushnell Park and Founders Bridge

Alternative S2b (Scarborough St)

- Route 218 to Matianuck Ave
- Keney Park to Westbourne Pkwy
- Scarborough St to West Blvd
- Farmington Ave to Bushnell Park and Founders Bridge

East Hartford

Overall, there were 22 alternatives screened for East Hartford. As presented in the Identified Alternatives chapter, the alternatives within each geographic section follow similar routes to one another but include design changes across alternatives. To clearly examine the results of the screening analysis, the alternatives have been organized within subsections. The Central and South Alternatives explore many variations in particular. However, the results across the north, central, and south were compared as a whole to evaluate all alternatives.

The South Alternatives are organized by where they connect to the riverfront trail to the south and where they enter the Pratt & Whitney campus along Brewer Street. The most variation was within the Central Alternatives with 16 alternatives in total. The Central Alternatives are organized by three levels of design changes:

- Founders Bridge and Silver Lane
  - Main Street
  - Route 2
  - Riverfront
- Main Street crossing at East River Drive/Silver Lane
  - At-Grade
  - Grade-separated
- Silver Lane and Simmons Road
  - I-84 ROW
  - Silver Lane

To run along the I-84 ROW between Silver Lane and Simmons Road, the alternatives turn north from Silver Lane either across from Mercer Avenue or at 320 Silver Lane. If the alternatives connect to Simmons Road directly from Silver Lane, the alternatives cross East Hartford Boulevard with an at-grade or grade-separated crossing along Pratt & Whitney property to the south.

A summary chart showing the scoring results for each alternative is shown in Table 5. Scoring ranged from a high score of 122.7 points for Alternative C7 to a low score of 72.2 points for Alternative C15. The alternatives are ranked as follows:

- C7 (Riverfront) - 122.7 Points
- C3 (Riverfront) - 118.8 Points
- S4 (Brewer St) - 118.2 Points
- S3 (Brewer St) - 111.5 Points
- S2 (Brewer St) - 111.3 Points
- C13 (Riverfront) - 111.3 Points
- C6 (Riverfront) - 108.7 Points
- C11 (Riverfront) - 108.3 Points
- S1 (Brewer St) - 104.7 Points
- C2 (Riverfront) - 104.7 Points
- C8 (Route 2) - 100.1 Points
- C10 (Riverfront) - 97.2 Points
- C4 (Route 2) - 96.2 Points
- C16 (Main St) - 94.5 Points
- C9 (Riverfront) - 94.2 Points
- C14 (Route 2) - 88.9 Points
- C5 (Route 2) - 86.5 Points
- C12 (Route 2) - 85.8 Points
- N2 (Hockanum River) - 84.5 Points
- C1 (Route 2) - 82.6 Points
- N1 (Hockanum River) - 74.2 Points
- C15 (Main St) - 72.2 Points

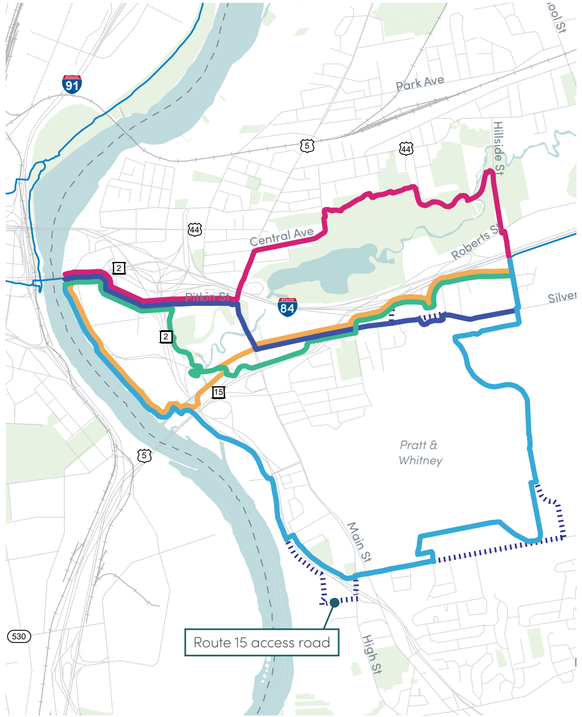
View of property at 320 Silver Lane facing south towards Silver Lane

Screening Results

Central Alternatives included the highest and lowest scores of all the screened alternatives, but they vary across the combinations of routes. Overall, they scored well for off-road and environmental impact criteria. The Central Alternatives score lower for connectivity given population and destinations are limited with Pratt & Whitney campus directly to the south and I-84 to the north of Silver Lane. Across the subareas, the Riverfront Alternatives tend to score higher as there are more off-road segments, fewer driveway and roadway crossings, and fewer costs to construct new shared-use paths. With any combination, grade-separated crossings score better than at-grade crossings at either Main Street or East Hartford Boulevard. Of the variants, the alternatives along I-84 score higher when they connect to Silver Lane at the ramps across from Mercer Avenue.

Between the two Hockanum River Alternatives, Alternative N1 scores better for personal security and environmental impact than Alternative N2. Overall, the North Alternatives score lower than most alternatives due to the environmental impacts within wetlands, floodplains, and NDDB areas. The environmental impacts would require significant permitting that may be costly and delay a project schedule.

Of the Brewer Street Alternatives, S3 and S4 score higher as they connect the riverfront trail and Brewer Street further north from Ensign Street. The variations across the Brewer Street Alternatives score higher when the trail enters the Pratt & Whitney campus further west due to in part improved right-of-way coordination and costs.



East Hartford Alternatives

0 0.75 Miles

N

Study Area
Connected alternatives
Route 2
Main St
Riverfront
Hockanum River
Brewer Street
Variant

Off-road (30 Points)

Alternative C7 scored the highest at 27.8 points because it has the highest proportion of fully separated facility along the route. Alternative C15 scored the lowest at 15.9 points due to segments of sidepath close to the roadway.

Traffic Safety (30 Points)

Alternative C7 received the maximum score of 30.0 points because it includes entirely grade-separated crossings at roadways and crosses no driveways. Alternative C15 scored 0 points because there is an at-grade crossing at Main Street and many driveway crossings along the north side of Silver Lane.

Connectivity (30 Points)

Alternative N2 scored the highest in this category with 20.8 points because the northern route accesses the most population, parks, and transit nearby. Alternative C8 scored the lowest at 6.6 points because of seasonal closures due to flooding along the riverfront and limited connections to population or employment centers.

Equity (30 Points)

Alternative S2 scored the maximum value of 30.0 points because the trail is accessible to the most Environmental Justice neighborhoods. Alternative N1 scored the lowest at 9.0 points.

Table 5: East Hartford Evaluation Matrix Summary

* Illustrated in Identified Alternatives mapping. Note: Highlighted cell indicates the top score for each criteria

Criteria	Max. Pts	North - Hockanum River		South - Brewer Street			
		N1*	N2*	S1*	S2	S3*	S4
1: Off-Road	30	20.3	24.1	20.3	22.3	21.0	23.1
2: Traffic Safety	30	9.1	14.9	15.6	15.6	19.0	19.0
3: Connectivity	30	19.4	20.8	16.1	15.2	17.1	16.2
4. Equity	30	9.0	12.7	26.7	30.0	26.2	29.6
5: Environmental Impact	20	5.3	0.0	14.8	12.6	14.8	12.6
6. Personal Security	10	7.4	6.2	4.1	2.5	4.2	2.6
7: Right-of-Way	10	3.7	5.6	4.2	7.1	4.2	7.2
8: Cost	10	0.0	0.2	2.9	6.0	4.8	7.9
TOTAL	**170**	**74.2**	**84.5**	**104.7**	**111.3**	**111.5**	**118.2**

Environment (20 Points)

Alternative C15 scored the highest with 18.7 points because there are minimal areas where the trail crosses NDDB areas. Alternative N2 scored 0.0 points because the riverfront and Hockanum River Trail include areas of wetlands, floodplain, and NDDB areas.

Personal Security (10 Points)

Alternative N1 scored the highest at 7.4 points due to the scenic qualities of the Hockanum River Trail in addition to some egress/access points. Alternative S2 scored the lowest at 2.5 points because of the limited egress/access points along the riverfront trail and Pratt & Whitney campus.

Right-of-way (10 Points)

Alternatives C7 received the maximum score of 10.0 points because the trail can be accommodated within existing right-of-way or parks. Alternative C15 scored 0.0 points because of the number of parcels it crosses between Silver Lane and Simmons Road.

Cost (10 Points)

Alternative C11 scored the highest at 10.0 points because it includes only a short length of trail to be constructed and a small amount of right-of-way coordination. Alternatives N1 scored 0.0 points because of the upgrades to the Hockanum River Trail boardwalk and the cost of environmental permitting that would be required.

Criteria (cont.)	Max. Pts	Central - Route 2						Central - Main St	
		At-grade Main St				Grade-separated Main St			
		I-84		Silver Ln		I-84		I-84	Silver Ln
		C1*	C5	C12	C14	C4*	C8	C16*	C15*
1: Off-Road	30	20.6	21.5	20.2	21.0	23.2	24.1	19.2	15.9
2: Traffic Safety	30	10.3	12.9	10.3	13.9	20.2	22.8	20.1	0.0
3: Connectivity	30	8.8	8.1	9.0	8.5	7.3	6.6	9.8	11.8
4. Equity	30	11.6	11.5	15.1	15.3	12.1	11.9	10.4	14.3
5: Environmental Impact	20	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.4	15.4	18.6	18.7
6. Personal Security	10	5.5	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.4	5.2	5.4	6.0
7: Right-of-Way	10	4.9	6.1	4.6	3.8	0.0	5.6	5.6	0.0
8: Cost	10	5.4	5.6	5.8	5.4	5.5	5.3	5.3	5.5
TOTAL	**170**	**82.6**	**86.5**	**85.8**	**88.9**	**96.2**	**100.1**	**94.5**	**72.2**

Criteria (cont.)	Max. Pts	Central - Riverfront							
		At-grade Main St				Grade-separated Main St			
		I-84		Silver Ln		I-84		Silver Ln	
		C2*	C6	C9	C10	C3*	C7	C11	C13
1: Off-Road	30	24.6	25.4	21.6	22.3	26.9	27.8	23.8	24.5
2: Traffic Safety	30	17.5	20.1	7.6	11.2	27.3	30.0	17.5	21.1
3: Connectivity	30	12.7	12.0	14.4	14.0	11.6	10.9	13.3	12.9
4. Equity	30	14.5	14.4	17.4	17.6	14.2	14.1	17.2	17.4
5: Environmental Impact	20	15.7	15.7	15.8	15.8	16.2	16.2	16.3	16.3
6. Personal Security	10	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.4	4.4
7: Right-of-Way	10	6.0	7.3	3.1	2.3	8.8	10.0	5.8	5.0
8: Cost	10	9.1	9.3	9.8	9.5	9.2	9.5	10.0	9.7
TOTAL	**170**	**104.7**	**108.7**	**94.2**	**97.2**	**118.8**	**122.7**	**108.3**	**111.3**

Alternatives Snapshot

Hockanum River

Alternative N1

- Founders Bridge to Pitkin St
- Main St to Central Ave
- Hockanum River Boardwalk to Simmons Rd

Alternative N2

- Founders Bridge to Riverfront Trail
- Riverfront Trail to Route 15 access road
- Main St to Central Ave
- Hockanum River Boardwalk to Simmons Rd

Brewer Street

Alternative S1

- Founders Bridge to Riverfront Trail
- Riverfront Trail to Riverside Dr
- Pent Rd connection to Brewer St
- P&W Access Rd to Simmons Rd

Alternative S2

- Founders Bridge to Riverfront Trail
- Riverfront Trail to Riverside Dr
- Pent Rd connection to Brewer St
- Contractors Rd to Simmons Rd

Alternative S3

- Founders Bridge to Riverfront Trail
- Riverfront Trail to Riverside Dr
- Ensign St connection to Brewer St
- P&W access road to Simmons Rd

Alternative S4

- Founders Bridge to Riverfront Trail
- Riverfront Trail to Riverside Dr
- Ensign St connection to Brewer St
- Contractors Rd to Simmons Rd

Route 2

Alternative C1

- Founders Bridge to Route 2
- Main St at-grade crossing to Silver Ln
- I-84 ramps via 320 Silver Ln
- Clement Rd to Simmons Rd

Alternative C5

- Founders Bridge to Route 2
- Main St at-grade crossing to Silver Ln
- I-84 ramps via Mercer Ave
- Clement Rd to Simmons Rd

Alternative C12

- Founders Bridge to Route 2
- Main St grade-separated crossing to Silver Ln
- East Hartford Blvd at-grade crossing to Simmons Rd

Alternative C14

- Founders Bridge to Route 2
- Main St grade-separated crossing to Silver Ln
- East Hartford Blvd grade-separated crossing to Simmons Rd

Alternative C4

- Founders Bridge to Route 2
- Main St grade-separated crossing to Silver Ln
- I-84 ramps via 320 Silver Ln
- Clement Rd to Simmons Rd

Alternative C8

- Founders Bridge to Route 2
- Main St grade-separated crossing to Silver Ln
- I-84 ramps via Mercer Ave
- Clement Rd to Simmons Rd

Main Street

Alternative C16

- Founders Bridge to Pitkin St
- Main St to Silver Ln
- I-84 ramps via Mercer Ave
- Clement Rd to Simmons Rd

Alternative C15

- Founders Bridge to Pitkin St
- Main St to Silver Ln
- East Hartford Blvd grade-separated crossing to Simmons Rd

Riverfront

Alternative C2

- Founders Bridge to Riverfront Trail
- Riverfront Trail to Route 15 access road
- Main St at-grade crossing to Silver Ln
- I-84 ramps via 320 Silver Ln
- Clement Rd to Simmons Rd

Alternative C6

- Founders Bridge to Riverfront Trail
- Riverfront Trail to Route 15 access road
- Main St at-grade crossing to Silver Ln
- I-84 ramps via Mercer Ave
- Clement Rd to Simmons Rd

Alternative C9

- Founders Bridge to Riverfront Trail
- Riverfront Trail to Route 15 access road
- Main St at-grade crossing to Silver Ln
- East Hartford Blvd at-grade crossing to Simmons Rd

Alternative C10

- Founders Bridge to Riverfront Trail
- Riverfront Trail to Route 15 access road
- Main St at-grade crossing to Silver Ln
- East Hartford grade-separated crossing to Simmons Rd

Alternative C3

- Founders Bridge to Riverfront Trail
- Riverfront Trail to Route 15 access road
- Main St grade-separated crossing to Silver Ln
- I-84 ramps via 320 Silver Ln
- Clement Rd to Simmons Rd

Alternative C7

- Founders Bridge to Riverfront Trail
- Riverfront Trail to Route 15 access road
- Main St grade-separated crossing to Silver Ln
- I-84 ramps via Mercer Ave
- Clement Rd to Simmons Rd

Alternative C11

- Founders Bridge to Riverfront Trail
- Riverfront Trail to Route 15 access road
- Main St grade-separated crossing to Silver Ln
- East Hartford Blvd at-grade crossing to Simmons Rd

Alternative C13

- Founders Bridge to Riverfront Trail
- Riverfront Trail to Route 15 access road
- Main St grade-separated crossing to Silver Ln
- East Hartford Blvd grade-separated crossing to Simmons Rd

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SHORTLIST ALTERNATIVES

Overview

Based on the screening analysis, the study team and municipal staff selected shortlist alternatives to analyze in more detail. While the selection was guided by the quantitative results, the final set of shortlist alternatives also factored in qualitative considerations, such as ongoing projects and future conditions that were not assumed in the screening analysis.

The shortlist alternatives were refined in the following ways:

- The conceptual design of each alternative was updated as the study progressed. For the shortlist, this included developing more detailed design elements, as well as iterations of the proposed routes. While individual segments may have changed, the overall route for each alternative stayed the same.
- The study team developed assumptions of probable costs to compare the conceptual designs. The total cost of each alternative includes estimated fees for design, materials, and construction in 2024 dollars. The full analysis is included in the ***Appendix D.*** The identification of probable costs is made on the basis of the study team's professional judgment, experience, and publicly available information on the existing site conditions.
- Economic development considerations were also explored by E-Consult Solutions Inc. (ESI), a consulting firm specializing in the evaluation of economic and fiscal outcomes of programs and developments across various government agencies. The analysis evaluated how the alternatives would relate to potential visitors, property value premiums, planned development, and incompatible land uses near the trail. A full memo for each municipality is included in ***Appendix E.***

Economic Consideration

The economic analysis memos incorporate prior research on how trails benefit nearby property values. Trails are amenities that add value in the real estate market, though their impact is often modest and largely dependent on the types of properties or uses near the trail. The amount of value that trails add depends on a variety of factors such as perceived safety, connectivity to other trails and destinations, and an overall pleasant experience for users. ***In other words, the most used trails have the most economic impact.***

The ideal trail alternative serves many residents and visitors, has compatible land use patterns to encourage the use of the trail, and increases market value for the properties nearby. Generally, trails generate positive synergies with most residential, open space uses, commercial, and institutional uses in the vicinity. In contrast, trails adjacent to industrial uses lack such synergies.

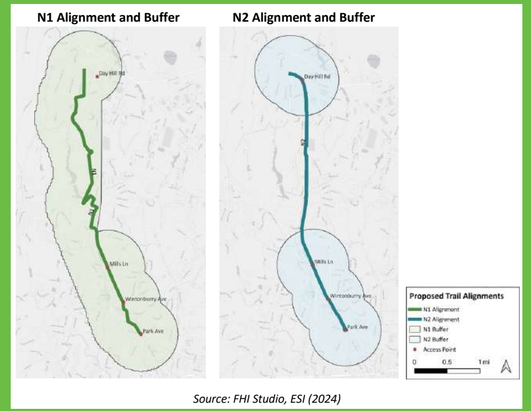
There can be price premiums for residential properties with access to walking, biking, or multi-use trails. Trails can improve the aesthetic appeal and interconnectedness of a neighborhood, provide recreational opportunities and related health and wellness benefits for people who live nearby, and offer savings for commuters to travel by bike or by foot rather than by car.

Trails can also increase the visibility and accessibility of businesses, drawing in customers who might not have visited otherwise. Retail establishments, cafes, and restaurants near trails often see an uptick in business, as trail users stop to shop, eat, or rest. This increased foot traffic can be especially beneficial for small, local businesses that rely on passing trade. Offices and hotels can also benefit from proximity to trails, providing workers and visitors with opportunities for recreation or commuting.

A full memo on economic considerations and trail alignments for each municipality is attached in the Appendix. For each municipality, the economic analysis follows a similar framework with three questions in mind: 1) How many people would the trail serve? 2) Does the nearby land use pattern encourage or discourage the use of the trail? 3) How much value does the trail add to the nearby properties?

Economic Analysis Methodology

Figure 10: Bloomfield Economic Analysis Study Area



Source: FHI Studio, ESI (2024)

A half-mile buffer was used to analyze population and land use nearby the trail. Although research suggests that the amenity value of a trail may improve property values, these property impacts diminish the further the property is from the trail. In addition, it is assumed residents within walking distance of the route are most likely to use it and feel its benefits.

Physical barriers, such as highways, railroads, or rivers, also "block" the effects of potential property value premiums. As a result, the buffers were adjusted based on access points to the route. For example in Bloomfield, residents living on the east side of the Griffin Line are farther than one half-mile from the existing railroad crossings. Therefore, this area was excluded from the study area as shown in Figure 9.

Shortlist Alternatives

Bloomfield

The alternatives in Bloomfield are broken into two geographic - North Alternatives and South Alternatives - with Park Avenue as the dividing line. Two shortlist alternatives were chosen for each area.

North Alternatives

Alternatives N1 and N2 were the only options carried forward from the screening analysis, as Alternative N3 was removed from consideration due to its potential environmental impact, as previously discussed. From the Bloomfield Greenway, Alternative N1 continues south within the Tunxis Avenue ROW and incorporates open space along Reservoir No. 3. In comparison, Alternative N2 crosses Day Hill Road from the Bloomfield Greenway trailhead and runs primarily as a RWT configuration until Park Avenue.

Alternatives N1 and N2 overlap between Dorothy Drive and Wintonbury Avenue. To the south, Alternative N1 crosses Wintonbury Avenue onto a sidepath along Jerome Avenue, turning east onto Seneca Road. This integrates the Town's ongoing work for the Park Avenue sidepath between Seneca Road and Crestview Drive, as recommended in the Bloomfield Greenway Cross-Town Bicycle/Pedestrian Connectivity Project. Alternative N2, by contrast, continues along the Griffin Line to the south of Wintonbury Avenue. At Park Avenue, Alternative N2 also connects to the sidepath between the Griffin Line and Crestview Drive. The Bloomfield South section begins at Crestview Drive to further develop the trail through the high school property.

Alternative N2 slightly outperforms Alternative N1 in most categories with the exception of personal security and connectivity. While both scored similarly overall, there are a few key differences between their off-road design and personal security measures. Alternative N2 includes more fully separated off-road segments, yet its limited access/egress points along the RWT configuration raise concerns about personal security. In contrast, Alternative N1 is more accessible to surrounding neighborhoods, providing more frequent access/egress points and improved connectivity.

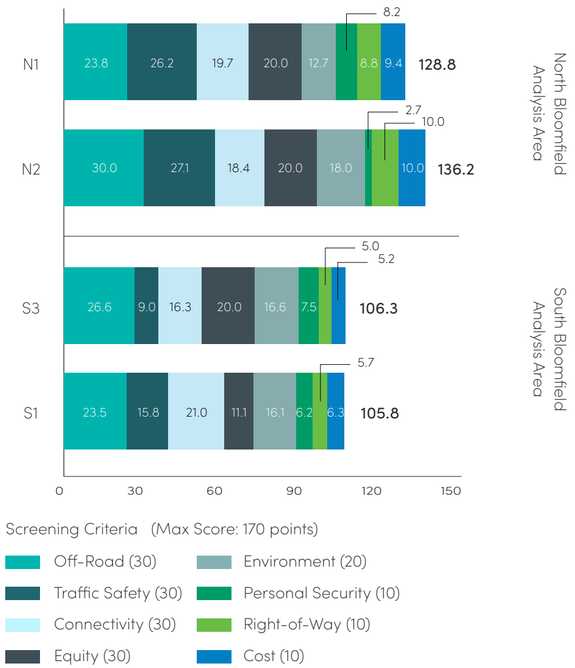
South Alternatives

In the Bloomfield South section, Alternatives S1 and S3 advanced to the shortlist. Alternative S2 was removed from consideration due to its potential environmental impact, limited access/egress points, and few connections to communities with high ETC scores. Alternatives S1 and S3 follow the same path from Park Avenue to Tyler Street. From there, Alternative S3 heads east towards the Windsor town line, utilizing the former trolley corridor as a shared-use path. This connects to Rockwell Park, a local priority to the Town, and offers regional links to Keney Park, Windsor Meadows State Park, and the Connecticut River. On the other hand, Alternative S1 extends south to the Copaco Shopping Center via sidepaths and a shared-use path through vacant land to Tobey Road. This route offers a potential connection to RWT along the Griffin Line corridor through Hartford, which has regional interest and is further explored in this study.

Alternative S3 scored higher in the environment category because there are no wetlands within the trolley corridor. In contrast, Alternative S1 crosses a wetland area behind Copaco, requiring a raised boardwalk segment to mitigate environmental impacts. Alternative S3 also scored higher for equity, as it passes through more residential neighborhoods based on ETC data. However, Alternative S1 performed better in connectivity across other factors, such employment, commercial area, and transit.

In addition, Alternative S3 scored higher across the off-road and personal security categories because the trolley corridor is wide to accommodate the shared-use path, and there are many access/egress points where the corridor crosses local streets. However, its crossings over busy roads like Blue Hill Avenue resulted in a lower score for traffic safety. In comparison, Alternative S1 has fewer crossings and scored higher for traffic safety. That said, Alternative S1 scored lower for personal security because the route is more isolated with limited access/egress points.

Figure 11: Bloomfield Shortlist Screening Results



Cost Estimate

Between Alternatives N1 and N2, the Alternative N1 cost estimate is $8.7 million while the Alternative N2 cost estimate is $9.9 million. Alternative N1 has more costs predicted for ROW and utility coordination, as well as higher engineering costs. Meanwhile, the Alternative N2 cost estimate includes more expensive construction and raw materials costs specifically for fencing along the railroad corridor for safety.

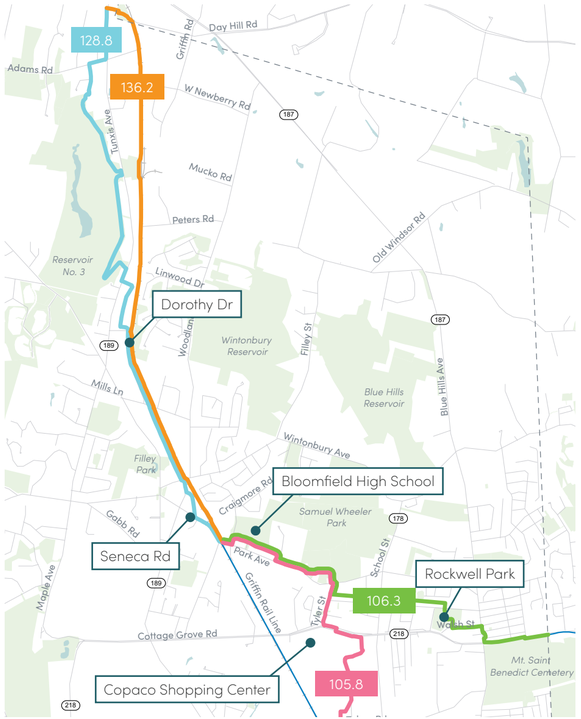
The Alternative S3 cost estimate is $7.5 million while the Alternative S1 cost estimate is $7.1 million. Both include costs for a bridge over Beaman's Brook, which is along Park Avenue between Revere Drive and Tyler Street. Overall, Alternative S3 is predicted to be slightly more expensive because the route is longer which requires more raw materials for the trail, street crossings, and construction.

Economic Benefits

The economic analysis examined the differences between the Alternative N1 and Alternative N2. The analysis extended the routes to the intersection of Park Avenue and Crestview Drive/Savin Road where the South Alternatives share the same path.

The main land use around both alternatives is residential. Institutional use is the second most significant land use for both, however significantly more in N1 (32%) compared to N2 (16%). The institutional land use around N1 can be attributed to the Bloomfield Reservoir, which is currently categorized as institutional. Due to limited entry points along the Griffin Line to access Alternative N2, more residents can access Alternative N1 within a half-mile buffer. This suggests that Alternative N2 may have more limited visitation than Alternative N1.

The limited access along the Griffin Line also impacts the estimated total residential property value premium, where Alternative N1 is about 40% higher than Alternative N2 ($9.3 million compared to $6.5 million in appraised value).



Bloomfield Shortlist Alternatives

Municipal Boundary
Identified Alternative
N1
N2
S1
S3
0 1.0 Miles
N

Hartford

Following meetings with the City and key stakeholders, three alternatives advanced to the shortlist: Alternative C1b along the Griffin Line, Alternative C2a through Keney Park, and Alternative N1 along the Connecticut River. The routes connect to the Bloomfield alternatives at different points, where Alternatives C2a and Alternative N1 connect along Route 218 near the Windsor town line and Alternative C1b links at Tobey Road.

Alternative C2a received the top score from the screening analysis. While Alternative C2a is a more indirect route, its zig-zag path connects to a range of neighborhoods, earning higher scores in equity and connectivity. The tradeoff is a lower cost score due to the longer distance. Alternative C2a also supports the ongoing improvements in Keney Park and incorporates portions of the Griffin Line RWT. Much of the route between Edwards Street and the Founders Bridge is already designated as part of the ECG through Bushnell Park and Constitution Plaza, with only Myrtle Street and Spruce Street needing upgrades to a 10-foot sidepath.

Other high-scoring alternatives shared traits with Alternative C2a. For example, Alternative C1a follows the Griffin Line and includes the same downtown segment. Similarly, Alternatives C2b and C3a follow the same alignment through Keney Park as Alternative C2a. They only differ across the downtown or Route 218 to Keney Park segments. Of the variants explored, alternatives scored higher when they followed the downtown segment through Bushnell Park and the Route 218 to Keney Park segment through Mandina Drive/Islamic Center of Connecticut.

Despite scoring lower overall, Alternatives C1b and N1 advanced to the shortlist to ensure a diverse range of design concepts were further developed. Alternative C1b was included to represent the Griffin Line alignment and include the Riverlink downtown segment, which was recommended as part of the Hartford400 Plan. Alternative N1 was selected in anticipation of Riverfront Recapture's future park and its ongoing work being completed. It is of interest to the ECG route to feature this development and history. Alternative N1 was the top score for traffic safety with few roadway crossings along the river. However, it still presents challenges for connectivity to destinations and residents for other use cases besides recreation. In general, the south alternatives were removed from consideration because of the traffic safety and driveway crossings.

Cost Estimate

The cost of the RWT along the Griffin Line was estimated separately as part of the Griffin Line Feasibility memo. The cost estimate of the RWT running from Tobey Road to Garden Street is approximately $30-39 million. Outside of the Griffin Line, it is assumed the alternatives would mostly utilize existing and planned bicycle infrastructure through Keney Park, downtown Hartford, and the riverfront trails separate from this study.

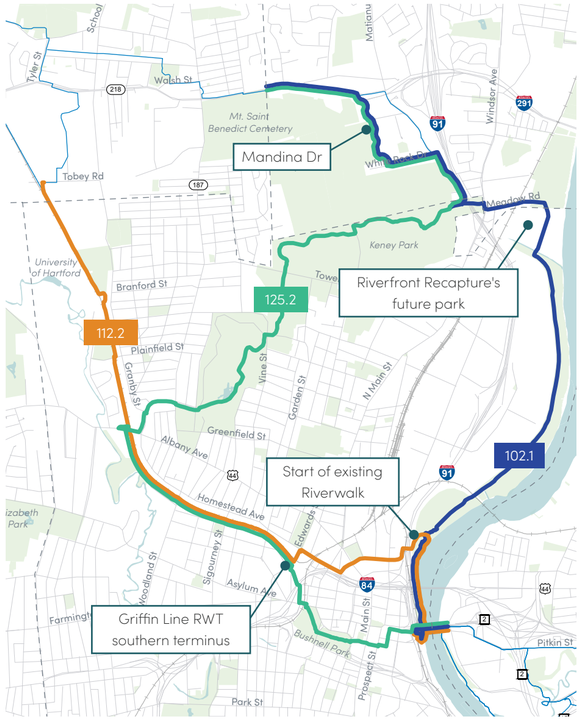
Figure 12: Hartford Shortlist Screening Results

Economic Benefits

The economic analysis focused on RWT feasibility within the Griffin Line corridor. Optimizing the economic development potential of a trail along the Griffin Line in Hartford requires consideration of several factors. First, the trail's alignment and design should maximize potential use of the trail. Trails along an active, although infrequent, rail line may discourage trail use. However, there are successful trails adjacent to active rail lines like the Somerville Community Path in Massachusetts or Blackstone River Greenway in Rhode Island. The Griffin Line Feasibility Study includes additional case studies of RWT examples. Designing the trail with user experience in mind is the most important component of its economic success.

Second, property value impacts are modest and varied. Trails generally boost property values of adjacent areas with complementary uses such as residential neighborhoods, job centers, or pedestrian friendly commercial districts that drive foot traffic to the trail. However, the population that can easily reach the Griffin Line RWT by walking is limited to those who live nearby its proposed access points. Per the recommended RWT configuration from the Feasibility Study, the trail follows the southwest side of the tracks for sections south of Albany Ave. As a result, the rail line also blocks access to the north towards Homestead Avenue. Therefore, the property value impacts may be diminished by the physical barrier of the rail line limiting areas where connections can be made.

Apart from ESI's memo, the study team observed land use patterns outside of the Griffin Line corridor to consider potential trail use. Following similar themes, the open space and residential access around Alternative C2a through Keney Park may support trail use and attract users. Along the Connecticut River, Alternative N1 also provides open space and a pleasing design. However, most properties to the east of the trail are industrial or vacant land, and the river acts as a natural boundary that limits direct residential access to the trail, which may undermine Alternative N1's potential benefits. The commercial land use and businesses through downtown Hartford aligns better with trail use.



Hartford Shortlist Alternatives

East Hartford

In coordination with Town staff, Alternatives C7 and S4 advanced to the shortlist. Both alternatives follow the riverfront trail south of the Founders Bridge. From there, Alternative C7 follows Silver Lane, while Alternative S4 crosses the Hockanum River to the south and then turns east along Brewer Street. As Alternative S4 is a longer route, there are potential environmental impacts within floodplains and NDDB areas, and there are more traffic safety concerns for crossings. However, it connects to more neighborhoods near Brewer Street. In comparison, Alternative C7 includes more grade-separated crossings and scores higher for traffic safety.

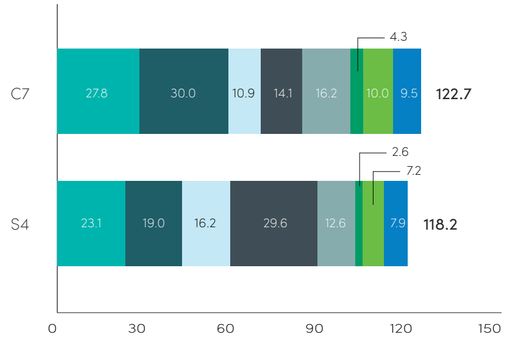
Of the 22 East Hartford alternatives, Alternative C7 received the top score. Following the screening analysis, the design was refined to avoid wetlands and connect more directly to East River Drive. North of the Charter Oak Bridge, the route turns east then north along the Route 2 exit ramp, instead of following the Hockanum River to Route 15. The trail remains within the ROW and still connects to the Route 15 bridge over Main Street to provide a grade-separated crossing.

Alternative C7 scores strongly due to the proposed grade-separated crossings at Main Street and Roberts Street. Ramp restriping is proposed to accommodate the route within the existing Route 15 bridge over Main Street. At Roberts Street, a culvert going underneath the roadway is proposed to facilitate a grade-separated crossing. On the east side of Roberts Street, the culvert would require the relocation of the highway noise wall to fit the 10-foot shared-use path within existing ROW towards Clement Street. The culvert design is further described in the Preferred Alignment chapter.

Overall, Alternative C3 was the second highest score; however, it follows the same route as Alternative C7 with the exception of the shared-use path along I-84 from 320 Silver Lane. The variation between Alternatives C7 and C3 could be considered as an alternative option pending final design. As such, Alternative C3 was not advanced to the shortlist.

Alternative S4 was the third highest score and was selected to further develop a southern route, utilizing Riverfront Recapture's ongoing work to extend Great River Park trails further south of Route 15. Overall, Alternative S4 represents the best combination of the southern variants, crossing Brewer Street from Ensign Street and entering the Pratt & Whitney Campus at Contractors Road. Further coordination would be required to cross the Pratt & Whitney campus.

Figure 13: East Hartford Shortlist Screening Results



Cost Estimate

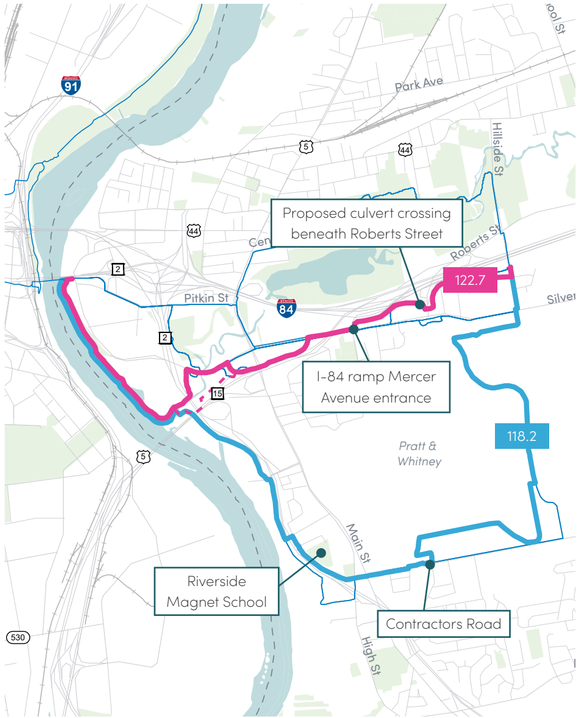
Although Alternative S4 is a longer route, it is estimated to cost less than Alternative C7. The cost estimate for Alternative S4 is $7.5 million while the cost estimate for Alternative C7 is $13.3 million. Alternative C7 is more expensive given costs for the grade-separated crossing and noise wall relocation at Roberts Street. Alternative C7 also includes the ramp realignment cost along Route 2 towards Silver Lane. Meanwhile, Alternative S4 includes a new boardwalk to be constructed over Pewterpot Brook along Brewer Street.

Economic Benefits

The economic analysis examined the differences between the Alternative C7 and Alternative S4. The main land use around both alternatives is residential. Meanwhile, there is much more commercial land use around Alternative C7 (25%) than Alternative S4 (17%), suggesting C7 includes more retail opportunities. In comparison, there is more industrial/institutional use along Alternative S4 (43%) than Alternative C7 (37%) due to the Rentschler Field redevelopment, which is currently categorized solely as "institutional." Additionally, both have relatively small proportions of natural and vacant land, although Alternative S4 has slightly more in both categories. Trails may add modest value to vacant, develop-able land, but vacant land does not necessarily encourage the use of trails.

In contrast, potential development can impact the use and aesthetic of the trails. For instance, the ongoing National Development Logistics Center at Rentschler Field is incompatible with trails and may discourage use or undermine potential benefits of Alternative S4. This is because the high volume of truck traffic and the low-volume of people on the site may impact concerns about safety. The presence of the logistics center may also compromise the aesthetic appeal of the trail. In comparison, the Founder's Plaza redevelopment is compatible with trail use as it provides a source of visitors and complements the riverfront landscape. This would benefit both Alternative C7 and Alternative S4.

ESI estimates a 4 percent property value premium for residential properties within a quarter mile of the trail and a 2 percent premium for residential properties between a quarter and a half mile. The total property value premium for Alternative S4 ($13,590,456) is greater than Alternative C7 ($11,848,776) because there are more residences along the southern route. However, when normalized by length, Alternative C7 has a higher property value premium on a per mile basis.



East Hartford Shortlist Alternatives

Municipal Boundary
Identified Alternative
C7
S4

0 0.75 Miles

N

PREFERRED ALIGNMENT

Overview

The Preferred Alignment, which will connect to the Bloomfield Greenway to the west and the Charter Oak Greenway to the east, comprises one proposed route through Bloomfield, Hartford, and East Hartford. Following the screening analysis, shortlist evaluation, and qualitative assessments, the selection process leading to this route carefully examined the benefits and tradeoffs between alternatives. Ultimately, the study team, in conjunction with municipal staff, advanced the Preferred Alignment to combine key takeaways from each phase.

This chapter describes the refinement of the Preferred Alignment. At this phase, there was extra consideration for how the route connects across town lines; there were additional coordination meetings with the municipalities, CTDOT, and key stakeholders to ensure constructibility and optimize connections along the route; and there were further updates to crossings and the trail configuration along roadways.

As a result of these efforts, the map on page 77 presents the Preferred Alignment across the entire study area. The alignment through Simsbury was selected as part of an analysis separate from the work in Bloomfield, Hartford, and East Hartford. The proposed route through Simsbury at the time of this report is shown. The Preferred Alignment addresses the following key objectives, which were identified at the beginning of this study:

- Identify a Preferred Alignment to complete the gap in the East Coast Greenway.
- Provide protected routes for walking, running, and biking to support active lifestyles and transportation connections.
- Preserve open space which protects wildlife habitat and supports vegetation important for stormwater drainage and air quality.
- Create links between communities and offer alternative transportation modes.
- Develop an off-road route comfortable for all users.

Preferred Alignment

From north to south, the Preferred Alignment begins at the Bloomfield Greenway, in Tariffville, and ends at the Charter Oak Greenway in East Hartford. In Bloomfield, the alignment follows a rail-with-trail (RWT) configuration along the Griffin Line railroad corridor from Day Hill Road to Wintonbury Avenue. From there, the alignment would include a 10-foot sidepath traveling southeast, primarily along Park Avenue and Tyler Street, towards the Copaco Shopping Center. South of Copaco, the alignment reconnects through open space to the Griffin Line corridor and crosses the town boundary into Hartford.

The Preferred Alignment would continue south as a RWT in Hartford. At Albany Avenue, the alignment splits into two ECG trails. The "Park Trail" runs northeast through Keney Park to its Windsor Avenue entrance and connects to the planned Riverfront Recapture park under development. The alignment utilizes the planned expansion of the Hartford/Joe Marfuggi Riverwalk trail from Windsor to the Founders Bridge. In contrast, the "Downtown Trail" travels south of Albany Avenue along the Griffin Line/Homestead Avenue corridor. In this area, the City of Hartford and CTDOT will determine the design of the Preferred Alignment as part of further study and discussions. Options for this segment include RWT or rail-to-trail within the Griffin Line corridor or a sidepath along Homestead Avenue. At Edwards Street, the Preferred Alignment includes two connections to the Founders Bridge - one utilizing Bushnell Park and passing by the State Capitol, and the other through Downtown North that would utilize a re-imagined bridge over I-91 once constructed.

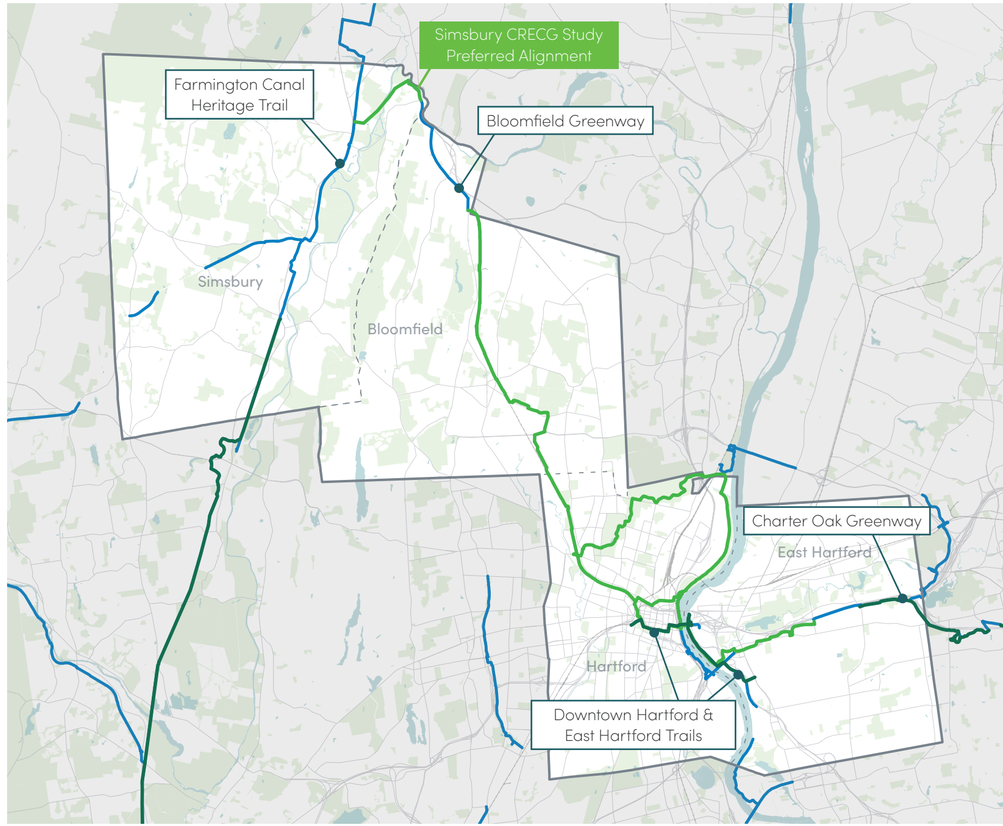
Crossing the Connecticut River, the Preferred Alignment in East Hartford connects to the Riverfront trails from the Founders Bridge to Route 15. At Route 15, the alignment turns east and connects to Silver Lane. The alignment would include a new, shared-use path behind properties along Silver Lane, cross below Roberts Street, and continue along Clement Road until reaching the Charter Oak Greenway.

The following sections break down the Preferred Alignment by each municipality. More detail is provided about the study's final recommendations on the route and its design. The Preferred Alignment also recommends spur trails to enhance connections outside of the formal ECG designation. Community connections are summarized in the following ***Implementation*** chapter.

Preferred Alignment

Preferred Alignment

- Study Area
- Municipal Boundary
- Preferred Alignment
- Existing ECG
- Existing Trail

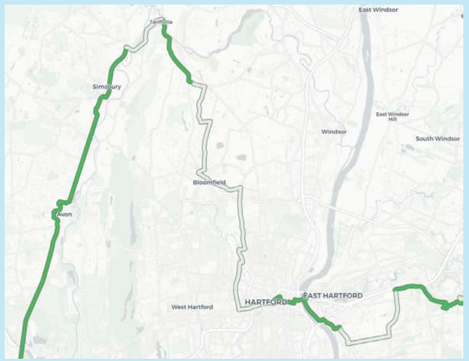


ECG in the Capitol Region

From Maine to Florida, the ECG travels through densely populated corridors to connect with users and highlight unique qualities across 15 states and 450 cities. The Farmington Canal Heritage Trail and Charter Oak Greenway, the study's termini, are popular trails along the ECG in Connecticut.

The interim ECG route includes on-road segments through Simsbury, Bloomfield, Hartford, and East Hartford. The Preferred Alignment builds upon the interim route to expand the off-road network and improve safety along the ECG through the study area. In addition, the Preferred Alignment would provide a new amenity for the local communities and offer more connection points to existing and future bicycle infrastructure.

The Preferred Alignment also showcases impressive features of the ECG in the Capitol Region, including the historic Farmington Canal, the Connecticut State Capitol, and the Connecticut River.



East Coast Greenway through the Study Area. Map courtesy of ECGA.

Design Guidance

The last phase of refinement comprises details at major crossings and final modifications to the proposed route. Design elements have been integrated into the study's analysis as they were reflected in the screening criteria, cost estimates, economic analyses, and coordination meetings. While design details are completed during final design and environmental permitting, key features of the Preferred Alignment are summarized in this chapter.

The Preferred Alignment integrates the **2023 East Coast Greenway Alliance Design Guide** tailored to the needs of the Capitol Region using stakeholder input. The Guide includes standards, best practices, and additional resources to design enjoyable, accessible, and safe trails. The route of the Preferred Alignment addresses common trail hazards and challenges such as stairs, uneven surfaces, serious inclines, and seasonal flooding.

Types of Trails

The majority of the Preferred Alignment is off-road, either as shared-use path or sidepath. **Shared-use paths** are paved trails through parks and other types of open space, and they are fully separated from motorized traffic. There are segments of **sidepaths** with grade-separated crossings where the route is along roadways. Figure 14 on page 79 includes examples of various trail facilities from the April 2023 public workshop visual preference survey. Shared-use paths are shown in Figures 14A and 14B, while sidepaths along roadways are shown in Figures 14C and 14F.

On-road segments for official ECG designation must be traffic-separated and protected to be considered complete. As such, the Preferred Alignment proposes that the existing, unprotected bike lanes along the route should be upgraded to ECG design standards. Figures 14D and 14E show examples of on-road facilities that would need additional protection, such as a concrete curb or raised bikeway.

Design Features

The conceptual design includes elements to enhance safety and accessibility, such as vegetated buffers, lighting, wide and well-maintained surfaces, and clear wayfinding signage.

The study process factored off-road design and visual character as a means to attract users. The importance of the design was underscored during the April 2023 public workshops. Figure 14 shows the visual preference survey during the Hartford workshop. The results of the survey demonstrated how off-road and landscaped trails were the most desirable for safety and enjoyment. The Indianapolis Cultural Trail (Figure 14F) was the most popular example, where landscaping buffers the sidepath from the adjacent roadway and promotes a greenway-like experience. Shared-use paths, which are fully separated from roadways, were the next most popular examples, including Great River Park trails in East Hartford (Figure 14A) and the Somerville Community Path in Massachusetts (Figure 14B). The sidepath (Figure 14C), separated bike lane (Figure 14D), and buffered cycle track (Figure 14E) were less popular.

Following the workshops, aesthetics was identified as part of the study's screening criteria within "Personal Security." This point was echoed in the economic analysis, which presented how compatible land uses and thoughtful design encourage trail use to increase a trail's economic impact.

Overall, the route of the Preferred Alignment is scenic, often through parks and open space, while balancing connectivity, environmental impact, and the remaining screening criteria. The proposed design elements support the overall enjoyment and comfort along the trail.

Figure 14: Hartford April 2023 public workshop visual preference survey

14A | Source: FHI Studio

14B | Source: FHI Studio

14C | Source: FHI Studio

14D | Source: FHI Studio

14E | Source: FHI Studio

14F | Source: FHI Studio

Refinement of the Preferred Alignment

Bloomfield

After discussions with Town of Bloomfield staff, elected officials, and members of the Town's Trails Committee, Alternative N2 was selected as the Preferred Alignment between Day Hill Road and Park Avenue. The North Section follows a RWT configuration along the Griffin Line railroad corridor. South of Park Avenue, the Town approved Alternatives S1 and S3 pending the route through Hartford. This two-tiered recommendation for the South Section was formally approved through a resolution by the Bloomfield Town Council on March 20, 2024. Ultimately, the study selected Alternative S1 as the Preferred Alignment to connect with the route in Hartford at Tobey Road. While the connection from Rockwell Park to Hartford may be explored in the future, Alternative S3 is considered as an alternate route.

At the time of this study's publication, the Town of Bloomfield received funding and initiated a project to design the trail between Bloomfield High School and Tobey Road. The project is ongoing and advances the conceptual design presented in this study. As a result, the South Section of the Preferred Alignment, as described on page 83, varies from the screened route previously discussed. This update exemplifies changes that can occur from the Preferred Alignment to final design.

North Section

Through the north section of Bloomfield, the Preferred Alignment begins at the existing trailhead terminus for the Bloomfield Greenway. The trail would utilize a new, unsignalized crossing to the south side of Day Hill Road. Due to traffic volumes and speed along the roadway, additional safety counter measures are recommended at this crossing. This may include a median refuge island, a rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB), or both. The 10-foot-wide paved path would then continue along the south side of Day Hill Road until meeting the Griffin Line corridor 600 feet to the east.

From Day Hill Road to Park Avenue, the Preferred Alignment would be a RWT configuration on the west side of the Griffin Line corridor. Because the corridor is owned by the State of Connecticut, coordination with CTDOT's Office of Rail and the active rail operator will be required. CTDOT guidelines advise for a 20-foot-wide offset between the centerline of the tracks and the closest edge of the trail. However, utility poles currently sit 25-30 feet from the center of the tracks. To construct the 10-foot wide trail, a 15-foot offset would allow the trail to avoid having to swerve around poles.

CTDOT guidelines indicate a 7-foot fence as standard for trails setback 20+ feet from the railroad and a solid non-scalable barrier as standard for trails between 10 to 20-feet of the railroad. However, fencing should be reconsidered during final design to ensure safety along the active railroad corridor while adding accessibility, visibility, and aesthetic quality to the trail. The Griffin Line Rail-with-Trail Feasibility Study recommends a shorter 4 to 5-foot fence along the extent of the corridor following other case study examples detailed in the document, which differs from the guidelines.

Vegetation and plantings should be considered along fencing to further enforce the separation between the railroad and the adjacent trail. Vegetation helps mitigate trespassing concerns and also improves trail aesthetics. The Griffin Line fencing design should be welcoming to trail users while prioritizing safety. Further coordination and approval with CTDOT would be necessary to finalize the Preferred Alignment's configuration and design.

View of the Griffin Line corridor looking north adjacent to Dorothy Drive.

Bloomfield Preferred Alignment

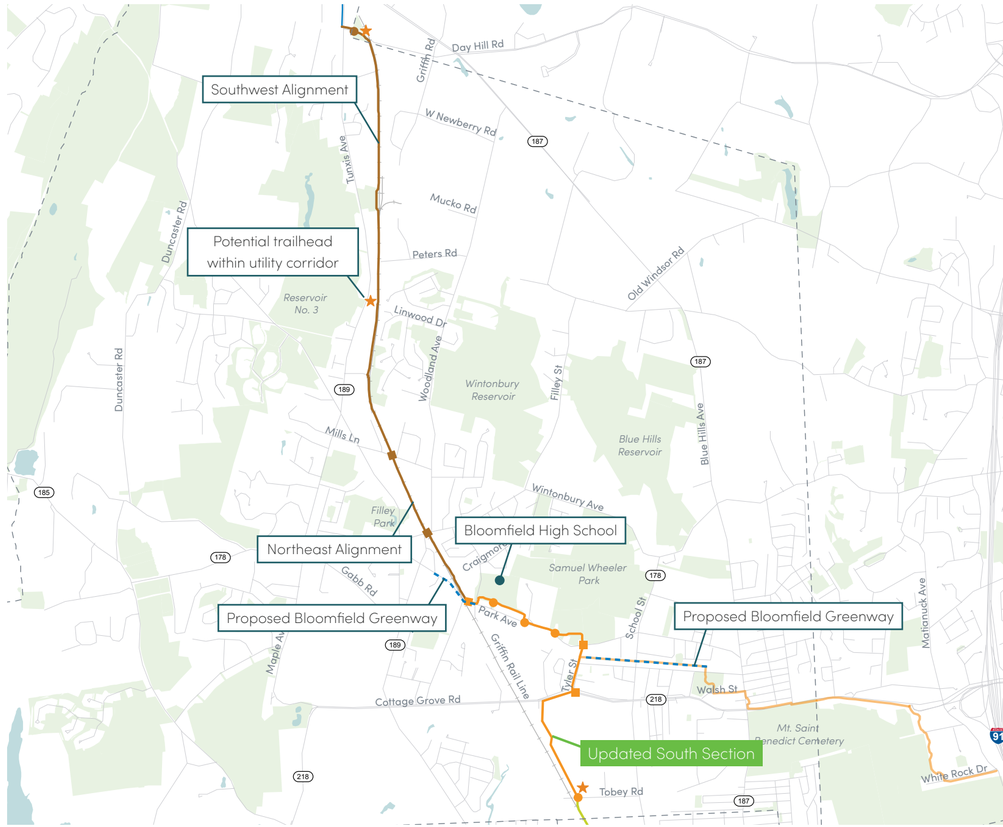
- Municipal Boundary
- Existing Trail
- In Design Trail
- Proposed Trailhead

Bloomfield Section

- North
- South
- Alternate South
- Unsignalized Crossing
- Signalized Crossing

Hartford Section

- Griffin Line



N 0 0.5 1 Miles

As the RWT continues south along the Griffin Line and approaches the Home Depot Distribution Center, there are designated wetlands immediately adjacent to the trail on the west side of the corridor. This would likely necessitate an elevated boardwalk design for a few hundred linear feet. Depending on the width of the rail corridor embankment and the placement of the utility poles, the boardwalk segment may pass outside of the Griffin Line ROW. The land immediately to the west is owned by the State of Connecticut. Coordination with CT DEEP will be required to understand any critical issues and to manage future permitting.

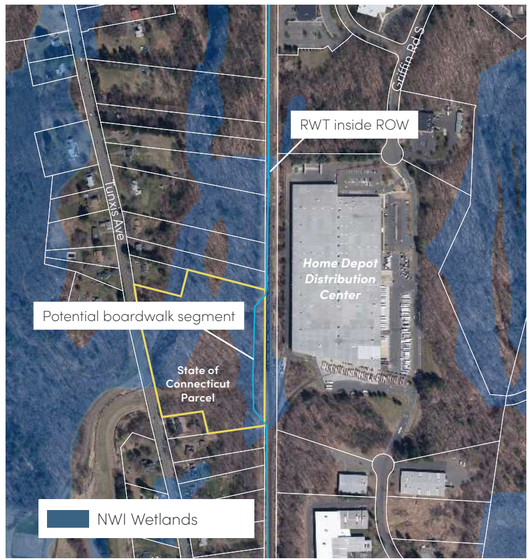


Figure 15: Concept plan of the Preferred Alignment to avoid wetlands within the Griffin Line. Source: USFWS

View of the buffer between the Griffin Line and roadway at Dorothy Drive looking south.

The RWT route continues south to Dorothy Drive where neighborhood access from Woodside Village and others to the ECG can be made from the west. Here, space is available for the trail to run outside of the rail ROW, providing additional buffer space between trail users and the active rail line. From Dorothy Drive to Mills Lane - a roughly 3,000-foot-long segment- and further, to Wintonbury Avenue, proximity of nearby properties requires the minimal offset to the rail line of 15-20 feet depending on the placement of the existing utility poles.

The recommended route includes the need to upgrade the railroad's crossing beacons and gates. Additional traffic analysis will be needed to determine the appropriate intersection treatment to provide a safe crossing for trail users. At Mills Lane, either RRFBs or a Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB) will be required. At Wintonbury Avenue, the trail crossing will need to be integrated into the existing traffic signal at Jerome Avenue. The route crosses from the southwest side of the railroad corridor to the northeast. Signal phasing could be designed to allow a protected phase for trail users while northbound motor vehicles are permitted to turn left from Jerome to Wintonbury.

South Section

At Park Avenue, the Preferred Alignment would exit the Griffin Line corridor to turn east along the roadway. The trail continues on the north side of Park Avenue following the proposed Bloomfield Greenway to Crestview Drive. Utilizing the existing traffic signal and crosswalk, the Preferred Alignment turns north and then east, running along the south edge of Bloomfield High School. The Preferred Alignment returns to Park Avenue via Revere Drive. Between the high school parcel and Revere Drive, an easement would be needed to cross through the Manor House apartment complex.

From the Revere Drive/Park Avenue intersection, the trail continues east along the north side of Park Avenue as a sidepath within the ROW. Along Park Avenue, the sidewalk or travel lanes of the existing bridge over Beaman's Brook would need to be upgraded to accommodate a bike facility. Then, the Preferred Alignment would cross the western driveway to the Carmen Arace Middle School and continue as an east-west sidepath through the school's parcel towards the Human Services building. The route turns south where it intersects the driveway leading to the Tyler Street/Park Avenue signalized intersection. The trail continues south along the west side of Tyler Street.

At Cottage Grove Road/Route 218, the updated route turns to the west, connecting to the Griffin Line nearby Goodman Street. The route runs south as a RWT along the Griffin Line, aligning with the Preferred Alignment in Hartford.

View of the Tyler Street and Route 218/Cottage Grove Road intersection looking southeast

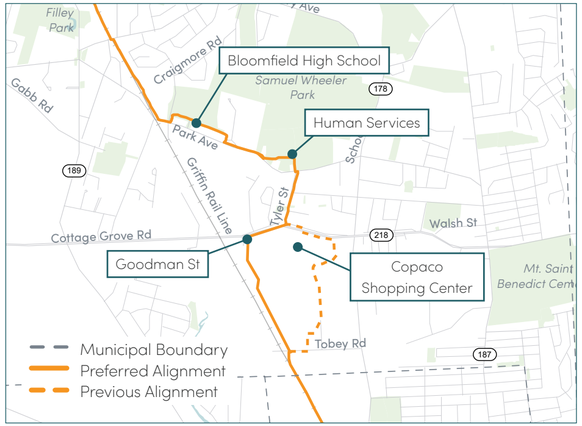


Figure 16: Bloomfield Update Alignment

The Town supports Alternative S1 to provide a connection to the Copaco Shopping Center. The updated route is more direct and shorter in length, avoids development through the vacant parcel south of Copaco thus retaining future development opportunities, and expands connections to the west side of Bloomfield. This allows trail users to access jobs, the bus stop, and an array of shopping and eating businesses. Providing this important link requires:

- the Tyler Street sidepath to Cottage Grove Road/Route 218;
- use of the western crosswalk at the Cottage Grove Road traffic signal (trail users to cross Cottage Grove Road concurrent with the westbound left turn phase into Copaco);
- additional safety elements to be analyzed when crossing at Cottage Grove Road, such as a median refuge island;
- trail through the woods along the south side of Cottage Grove Road;
- and a provided trail user connection to/from the eastbound bus stop

Hartford

The Preferred Alignment was selected based on coordination with the City of Hartford, iQuilt, and CTDOT including the Office of Rail. The Preferred Alignment in Hartford continues from the Bloomfield town line along the Griffin Line rail corridor and is described in three distinct sections:

- Griffin Line section (Alternative C1b): The RWT runs from Tobey Road to Albany Avenue.
- Park section (Alternatives C2a and N1): The trail zig-zags from Albany Avenue to the north through Keney Park, then back south along Riverfront Recapture trails.
- Downtown section (Alternatives C1b and C2a): A complementary trail travels south at Albany Avenue along Griffin Line/Homestead Avenue corridor and includes two routes from Edwards Street to the riverfront.

After the final **Griffin Line Rail-with-Trail Feasibility Memo** was published in April 2024, a series of coordination meetings between the study team, CTDOT Office of Rail, City of Hartford, and iQuilt were held to assess the proposed RWT configuration as part of the Preferred Alignment. Overall, the CTDOT Office of Rail and the City expressed support for the RWT along the Griffin Line between Tobey Road and Albany Avenue, but reservations to the south. The CTDOT Office of Rail noted that the RWT configuration south of Albany Avenue requires significant costs and coordination to construct grade-separated crossings of the railroad corridor and provide connections to the properties facing Homestead Avenue. The estimated cost is $26 - $33 million for just this southern section.

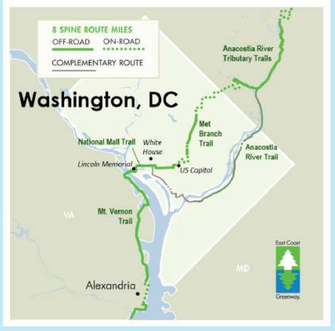
The City is also considering the Preferred Alignment to run outside of, but directly adjacent to, the Griffin Line along Homestead Avenue. The City has ongoing plans to redesign Homestead Avenue, including design for multimodal transportation along the roadway. Additionally, the City and iQuilt have discussed a RTT project, named the "Hartline," that re-imagines the entire rail corridor as a linear park if the rail line is ever decommissioned (or other such options that take the freight line out of consideration, which were discussed in the Feasibility Memo in more detail). As such, the Preferred Alignment includes the Griffin Line/Homestead Avenue corridor between Albany Avenue and Garden Street, but final decisions on RWT, RTT, or off-road routing and conceptual design will be completed outside the scope of this study.

The study team identified the two complementary trails to prioritize connectivity across the East Coast Greenway gap by advancing the Griffin Line to the north and to the south of Albany Avenue separately. The complementary trails would maximize connections to Bloomfield, Windsor, and East Hartford and highlight many of Hartford's unique features along the way.

Design Guidelines

The completed East Coast Greenway includes trail loops across its interstate system, similar to the Preferred Alignment proposed for Hartford. The ECGA Board of Trustees may designate a "complementary route" for particular scenic, historic, or cultural qualities. The complementary route includes wayfinding signage and connects to the primary route at two different points, forming a loop.

The study's Preferred Alignment does not specify which route would be the primary or complementary route. The study recommends that both routes are completed, and formal ECG designation will be reviewed by the City of Hartford and the ECGA Board. This chapter highlights the valuable qualities of both routes as they offer unique experiences for trail users through the Capitol Region.



East Coast Greenway through Washington D.C. Map courtesy of ECGA.

Hartford Preferred Alignment

- Municipal Boundary
- Existing Trail
- In Design Trail
- Proposed Trailhead

Hartford Section

- Griffin Line
- Park
- Park Interim Route
- Downtown
- Pending Final Design
- Unsignalized Crossing
- Signalized Crossing

Bloomfield Section

- South
- Alternate South

East Hartford Section

- Riverfront
- Riverfront Interim Route

Griffin Line Section

The Preferred Alignment would run as a RWT configuration along the northeast side of the railroad corridor from Tobey Road to Plainfield Street. The entrance to the Griffin Line corridor to the north would be through University of Hartford property at Tobey Road. From Tobey Road to Plainfield Street, this section is characterized by existing pylons and Eversource easement 15-foot off center on both sides of the rail line. Further coordination with CTDOT, Eversource, and the City should be undertaken during the design process.

The northeast side of the railroad ROW runs adjacent to Willowcreek Apartments, Weaver High School, and properties along Granby Street. Just south of Weaver High School, there is a drainage channel which flows towards the North Branch of the Park River. Within this area, the alignment shifts eastward to traverse over an existing culvert on Weaver High School property.

The Preferred Alignment would travel south and cross Plainfield street, an existing at-grade crossing, and continue to the southwest side of the railroad ROW. Rectangular rapid flashing beacons are recommended for the at-grade crossing at Plainfield Street for safety. Between Plainfield Street and Albany Avenue, the route would run along the landscaped area of the Village at Park River redevelopment, a Hartford Housing Authority-owned parcel. The redevelopment is also planning a trail along Mark Twain Drive, where the Preferred Alignment could connect from Plainfield Street and run parallel to the Griffin Line instead.

The City of Hartford is currently planning a sidepath along the north side of Albany Avenue crossing the Griffin Line. As such, the Preferred Alignment would connect up to the sidepath on the north side of the bridge. From Albany Avenue, there are two complementary routes traveling east towards East Hartford. Along the "Downtown" route, the Preferred Alignment would cross Albany Avenue south onto Homestead Avenue. The "Park" route would instead turn north onto Westbourne Parkway and travel towards Keney Park.

Hartford's Bike Network

Coordination meetings were held with staff from the City of Hartford to ensure the Preferred Alignment complemented work associated with the **2019 Hartford Bicycle Master Plan** and the ongoing **Keney Park Master Plan**. The City's internal bike network and the ECG route support one another to strengthen connections. The following map is adapted from the 2019 Hartford Bicycle Master Plan to show existing and planned bike facilities. Related to the ECG goal for protected facilities, shared roadways or bike boulevards are not included.

Figure 17:Hartford Existing and Future Protected Bike Paths

Park Section

From where the Preferred Alignment splits at Albany Avenue, the route would turn north onto the west side of Westbourne Parkway. It is recommended the existing bike lanes along Westbourne Parkway are upgraded and extended to run as a sidepath from Albany Avenue to Keney Park. At Granby Street, the route would cross the road to the east side of Westbourne Parkway and continue to the Keney Park Ridgefield Street entrance.

Once in Keney Park, the Preferred Alignment travels along existing park paths. The path travels northeasterly and crosses Vine Street onto the Keney-Waverly Field access road towards Tower Avenue. For safety countermeasures, a median refuge island, curb extensions, or RRFBs on Tower Avenue are recommended at this unsignalized crossing. The alignment would then utilize the old zoo access roads to travel east, meeting the main park roads near the Tower Avenue park entrance. The alignment favors the road to the south of the Keney Park Cricket Field and follows it out through the park's Windsor Avenue entrance passing below Route I-91.

Keney Park Ridgefield Street entrance

After exiting Keney Park, the alignment briefly turns south onto a sidepath along Windsor Avenue and crosses east onto the north side of Meadow Road. From there, the Preferred Alignment would connect to Riverfront Recapture's future park located south of Windsor Meadows State Park. The study team met with staff from the Town of Windsor to discuss the Preferred Alignment as it would cross town lines. The Town of Windsor is interested a section of the ECG crossing through the town along the Preferred Alignment, but future design is needed at the Windsor Avenue intersection for safety and coordination with ongoing work. The Town of Windsor also highlighted that the sidepath should be designed with future connectivity to the north in mind.

At Riverfront Recapture's future park, the Hartford/Joe Marfuggi Riverwalk to the south would serve the Preferred Alignment to Riverside Park. This new park and extended would complete the riverfront section of the Preferred Alignment. The Hartford/Joe Marfuggi Riverwalk would connect to Windsor Meadows State Park via a bridge over Decker Brook, as well. After a meeting with the study team and Riverfront Recapture, it was agreed upon that the Preferred Alignment will eventually match Riverfront Recapture's final design. The exact route is not represented in the Preferred Alignment as the work is ongoing. Riverfront Recapture expressed support of the ECG to feature the Hartford/Joe Marfuggi Riverwalk.

Flooding Considerations

As the Preferred Alignment is integrated with the City's bike network, potential on-road routes should be utilized as trail construction is ongoing and in the event of trail closures.

The existing Riverwalk experiences seasonal flooding along the Connecticut River. Following the ECGA Design Guidelines, the ECG often includes interim routes for flooding events. When the primary route is flooded, the interim route is signed and maintains connectivity to the trail. While on-road, trail users should be alert of vehicle traffic and driveway crossings. The Preferred Alignment identifies North Main Street as the interim ECG route when the Riverwalk is flooded. While design options are also being considered to elevate the future Joe Marfuggi Riverwalk out of the floodplain, the existing trail south of the Boathouse is still at risk. Regardless, North Main Street can serve as an interim route while design and construction at Riverfront Recapture's future park and the Joe Marfuggi Riverwalk is being completed.

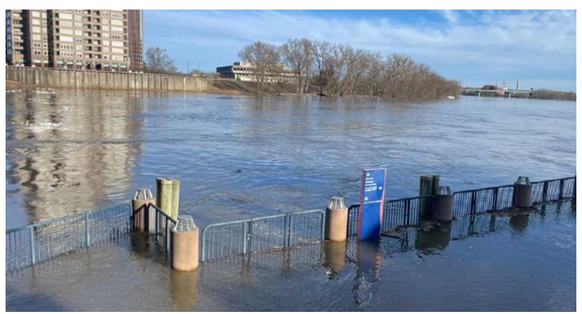
ECG Seasonal Trail Flooding. Photo courtesy of ECGA

Figure 18: Hartford Floodplains. Source: FEMA FIRM

Downtown Section

The Preferred Alignment south of Albany Avenue would continue along the Griffin Line/Homestead Avenue corridor until Edwards Street. In this area, the City of Hartford and CTDOT will determine the design of the Preferred Alignment as RWT within the Griffin Line corridor or a sidepath along Homestead Avenue as part of a later study. As a result of the Feasibility Study, the RWT configuration is proposed on the southwest side of the railroad. In response to a 2024 RFP from the CTDOT Office of Rail, it is anticipated that the railroad corridor will remain active. As such, it is unlikely a RTT configuration within the corridor is possible in the near future as the corridor will not be abandoned.

After exiting the Griffin/Homestead corridor at Edwards Street, the Preferred Alignment includes two connections to access the Founders Bridge and the riverfront section of the Preferred Alignment. Turning south, the Preferred Alignment would run as a 10-foot sidepath along Myrtle Street and Spruce Street to connect to the signed ECG route through Bushnell Park. The Preferred Alignment along the west side of Spruce Street would utilize a portion of the Union Station parking lot to construct the 10-foot sidepath and reconfigure a few parking spaces. Coordination with Union Station should be initiated in future design phases. To the north of Edwards Street, a 10-foot sidepath is proposed along Walnut Street and Pleasant Street to connect to the future Riverlink ramp over I-91 into Riverside Park. The Preferred Alignment continues north towards Windsor or south towards the Founders Bridge along the Hartford/Joe Marfuggi Riverwalk as discussed in the previous section.



Seasonal flooding along Riverwalk from Mortensen Riverfront Plaza

The Preferred Alignment includes both routes to/from Edwards Street to build up existing infrastructure and include extra considerations for flooding and accessibility. The routes converge at Mortensen Riverfront Plaza near the Founders Bridge. However, access between the Founders Bridge promenade and the riverfront requires stairs or a seasonal elevator. The two connections create a continuous loop between the riverfront and Edwards Street in the event of flooding or restricted accessibility. The two are not alternate routes; rather, both paths are part of the Preferred Alignment to guarantee connectivity and offer different user experiences.

The existing ECG includes completed trail sections from Bushnell Park to the Founders Bridge. The Preferred Alignment enhances this section by ensuring an accessible route to the riverfront, making connections to the larger trail system, and offering different user experiences.

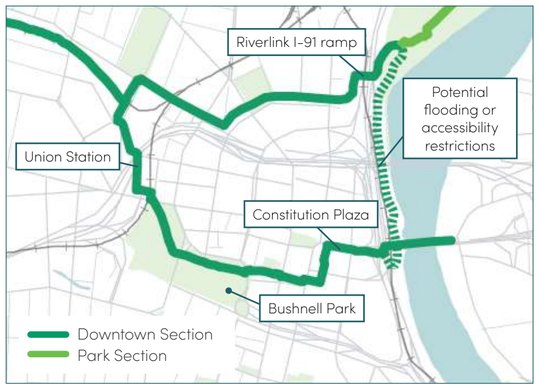


Figure 19: Hartford Preferred Alignment Downtown Section

East Hartford

In coordination with the Town staff, Alternative C7 was selected as the Preferred Alignment through East Hartford. This route was selected to prioritize community connections and recent development efforts along Silver Lane. The Preferred Alignment features the riverfront connection from the Founders Bridge and a new sidepath north of Silver Lane within CTDOT right-of-way. Coordination meetings with the Town of East Hartford and CTDOT further refined the route with special attention to the locations of grade-separated crossings. Overall, the Preferred Alignment in East Hartford is continuous and direct. In the following sections, the Preferred Alignment is split into the Riverfront Section and the Silver Lane Section for discussion purposes only.

Riverfront Section

The Preferred Alignment utilizes existing trails through Great River Park to connect between the Founders Bridge and Silver Lane. The existing trails through Great River Park are already ECG-designated, complete with signage, lighting, and emergency boxes. Great River Park, managed by Riverfront Recapture, is a features views along the Connecticut River and several community gathering spaces. During the screening analysis, the Riverfront section to Silver Lane scored higher than the alternative routes along Pitkin Street due to the riverfront's off-road design and limited roadway crossings. The Riverfront section is also compatible with the surrounding land use and potential housing developments at Founder's Plaza and 341 East River Drive, which were identified during the study's economic analysis. The development projects would complement the landscape and provide additional visitors to the trail.

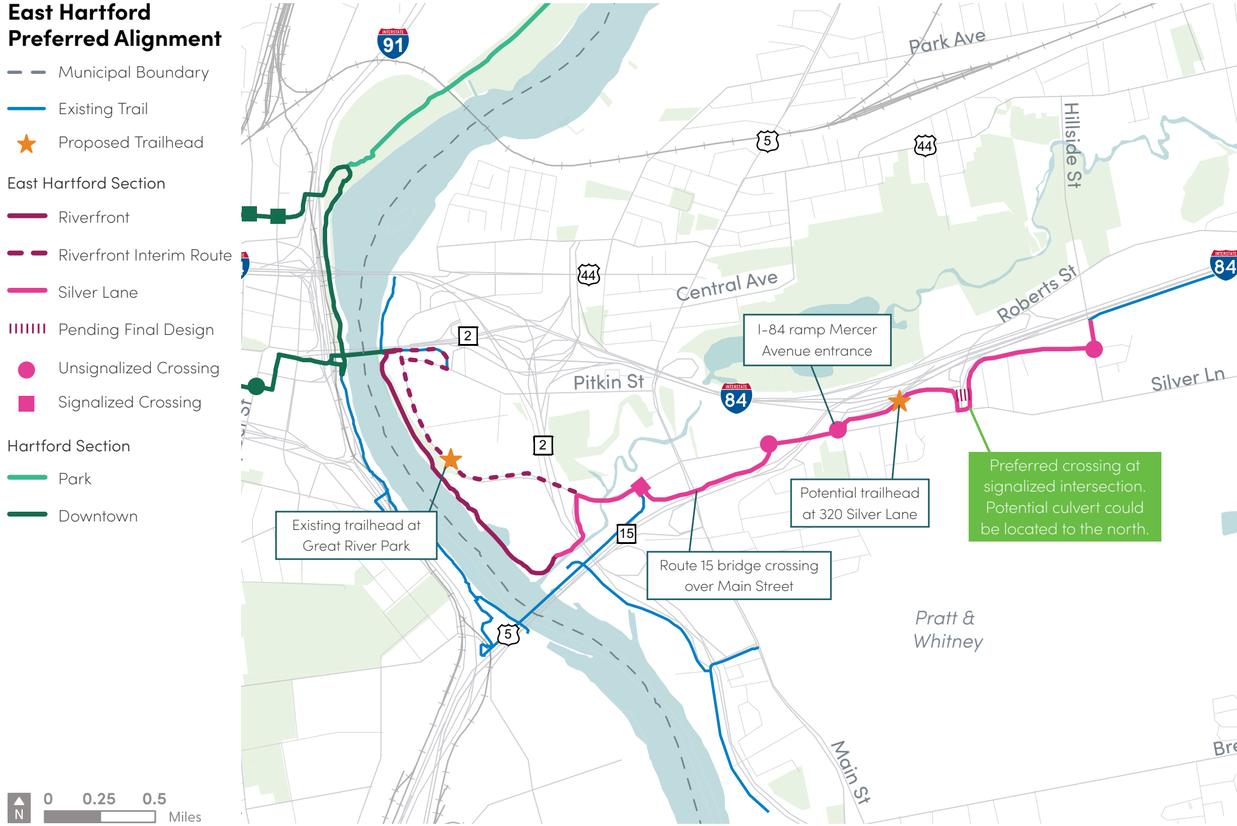
The Preferred Alignment connects Great River Park to Silver Lane with minimal roadway crossings. North of the Hockanum River, the existing trail would extend to the east and cross under Route 2 overpass. Turning north, the Preferred Alignment would follow an access road mirroring the Route 2 northbound Exit 4 off-ramp and connect to East River Drive.

Founders Bridge Connection

The Preferred Alignment begins in East Hartford along the walkway on the south side of the Founders Bridge. From the bridge, the Preferred Alignment may use the bridge stairs to reach Great River Park. To avoid stairs, the current ECG route follows the bridge ramps to East River Drive, turning north and entering the park from Riverview Square.

Like in Hartford, the Preferred Alignment includes an interim route as the riverfront trail experiences seasonal flooding from the Connecticut and Hockanum Rivers. From the Founders Bridge, the interim route follows the bridge ramp to Pitkin Street, turning west then south onto East River Drive. It is recommended the existing on-road bike lanes are upgraded to separated bike lanes for further protection. The interim route also provides another accessibility options to avoid the stairs from the Founders Bridge. Overall, the bridge ramp to Pitkin Street is a more gradual slope than the connection to East River Drive. The route may also connect to Great River Park at its driveway entrance to the south. The two routes converge at East River Drive to the north of the shared-use path along the Route 2 off-ramp.

Figure 20: Aerial view of East Hartford Riverfront Section Preferred Alignment with Existing Trail and Interim Route



Silver Lane Section

From the connection at East River Drive, the Preferred Alignment takes advantage of CTDOT ROW. The route crosses the current Route 15 on/off ramps utilizing the existing signalized intersection with East River Drive. After crossing, the sidepath follows the curvature of the Rte 15 Exit 90 off-ramp and makes use of the Route 15 bridge decking for a grade-separated crossing over Main Street. The Route 15 bridge has excess space to accommodate restriping and a physical barrier for the proposed sidepath.

East of Main Street, the trail would continue to follow the configuration of the Route 15 on-ramp at Silver Lane. The Preferred Alignment assumes the Exit 91 on-ramp would be reconfigured or eliminated to construct the trail within the ROW. Reconfiguration of the Exit 91 on-ramp is a recommendation of the Silver Lane Corridor Study. Early conversations with the Town and CTDOT suggested that the elimination of this on-ramp might be possible with the ability to maintain emergency access. At the beginning of the ramp on Silver Lane, the trail would cross to the north side of the roadway. Due to traffic volumes and speed along the roadway, safety counter measures would be needed at this crossing, such as a median refuge island or a RRFB, or both.

Figure 21: Proposed trail along Route 15 on-ramp at Silver Lane

The Preferred Alignment would briefly run as a sidepath between Main Street and the I-84 ramps across from Mercer Avenue along the north side of Silver Lane. Following the I-84 eastbound HOV ramp, the route turns north, and a shared-use path would be constructed within the highway ROW behind private properties fronting Silver Lane. The trail would be contained within CTDOT ROW. The trail would require a section of boardwalk to accommodate grade change along the highway embankment and to avoid wetland areas adjacent to the I-84 eastbound exit ramp to Roberts Street.

At Roberts Street, the study team originally proposed a culvert below the roadway to provide a grade-separated crossing to connect the path along the I-84 ramp with Clement Road. However, citing concerns about safety and creating an "attractive nuisance", the East Hartford Town Council preferred that the alignment continue to the intersection of Roberts Street and Silver Lane and utilize the existing crosswalk instead. Additionally, based on comments from CTDOT, further analysis during the design phase should include a review of the existing traffic operations to determine if lane reduction or other roadway modifications are possible to facilitate shorter and safer crossings. Intersection upgrades would enhance the local bike network to safely accommodate trail users. Design of a grade-separated crossing – culvert or bridge - could still be explored in the future if the Town becomes interested in pursuing, as presented on page 93.

From the east side of Roberts Street to Clement Road, the Preferred Alignment would run as a shared-use path between the noise wall for I-84 and the adjacent properties. To construct a 10-foot trail within the ROW, additional coordination would be needed with CTDOT to relocate the noise walls. The alignment could be pursued if and when the noise walls need to maintained or replaced. Alternatively, coordination with private landowners could also be pursued if the trail could not be designed within the existing ROW. Once the trail reaches Clement Road, the Preferred Alignment would run as a 10-foot sidepath or protected on-road facility along the street. At Simmons Road, the Preferred Alignment connects with the Charter Oak Greenway. Overall, the final design would closely involve work with CTDOT and abutting property owners from Mercer Avenue to Simmons Road.

Roberts Street Crossing Considerations

The East Hartford Town Council preferred that the alignment continue from the path along I-84 onto the existing crosswalk at the intersection of Roberts Street and Silver Lane. In consideration of potential traffic operations and safety modifications, a grade-separated crossing could also be evaluated in the future.

Multiple structures were explored to design a grade-separated crossing at Roberts Street. The study team, in coordination with the Town of East Hartford and CTDOT, determined the culvert design shown in Figure 22 to be the most feasible structure. The culvert would work well with the existing topography to avoid steep grade, require less elevation separation with the roadway, and result in a smaller cost compared to bridge designs. Grading work would be required to facilitate an accessible slope. In the event of flooding or maintenance, a 10-foot sidepath or sidewalk should extend south from the culvert to the intersection of Roberts Street and Silver Lane.

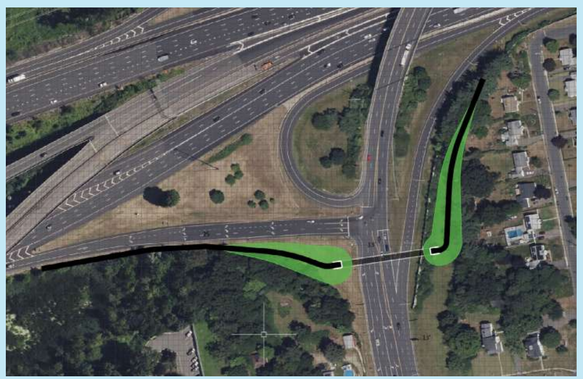


Figure 22: Proposed culvert design

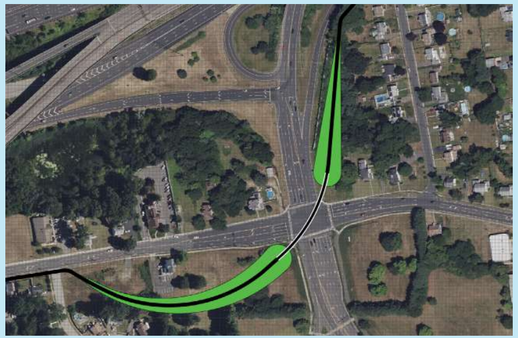


Figure 23: Proposed bridge design

Figure 24: Proposed bridge design

IMPLEMENTATION

Overview

The Preferred Alignment integrates existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities and identifies opportunities for new connections to enhance the local network. Planned trails that are in design as part of ongoing projects are also included. The Preferred Alignment can be phased as standalone projects that ultimately complete the remaining ECG gaps. This chapter provides an overview of the Preferred Alignment's potential community connections, explores funding resources, and outlines the phasing of projects to close the gap.

Outreach for the Draft Study

The draft study was published in July 2025. In order to finalize the study, the study team conducted another round of outreach to advertise the recommended Preferred Alignment and solicit feedback before municipal endorsement of the plan. The study team developed and placed lawn signs, distributed flyers, attended pop-up events, and hosted public meetings to meet with the community. The study team participated in the following events:

- East Hartford Farmers Market - July 15, 2025
- Bloomfield Summer Concert Series - July 17, 2025
- Hartford Planning & Zoning Commission - July 22, 2025
- Bloomfield Alvin & Beatrice Wood Center - July 22, 2025
- Hartford Mortensen Riverfront Plaza - July 24, 2025
- East Hartford Sounds of Summer - July 24, 2025
- Hartford 86GO Bushnell Park Meet Up - July 29, 2025
- East Hartford Back to School Backpack Rally - August 6, 2025
- Hartford Public Info Session @ Albany Library - August 6, 2025
- Hartford Public Info Session (virtual) - August 7, 2025
- East Hartford Planning & Zoning Commission - August 13, 2025

The public comment period for the draft study was open from July to August. The study team received 14 comments. The comments, the study team's responses, and the incorporated revisions are documented in ***Appendix H.***

Municipal Endorsement

The Bloomfield Town Council was presented to and endorsed the Study at their meeting on August 25, 2025, East Hartford Town Council on September 2, 2025, and City of Hartford's Planning, Economic Development, and Housing Committee was presented to on December 16, 2025 and a subsequent approval by City Council on January 12, 2026. Approval by East Hartford Town Council necessitated minor changes to the document to reflect their approval of the alignment except for the proposed culvert under Roberts Street, which they prefer cross at the existing intersection at Roberts Street and Silver Lane. The resolutions are documented in ***Appendix I.***

Yard sign advertising the draft final report along Trout Brook Trail in West Hartford

Community Connections

Potential trail links within 0.5 miles of the Preferred Alignment were identified to enhance routes outside of the ECG and support regional connections through nearby municipalities like Windsor, South Windsor, and West Hartford. The potential trail links are a mix of existing bike routes, destinations, and proposed connections for future consideration.

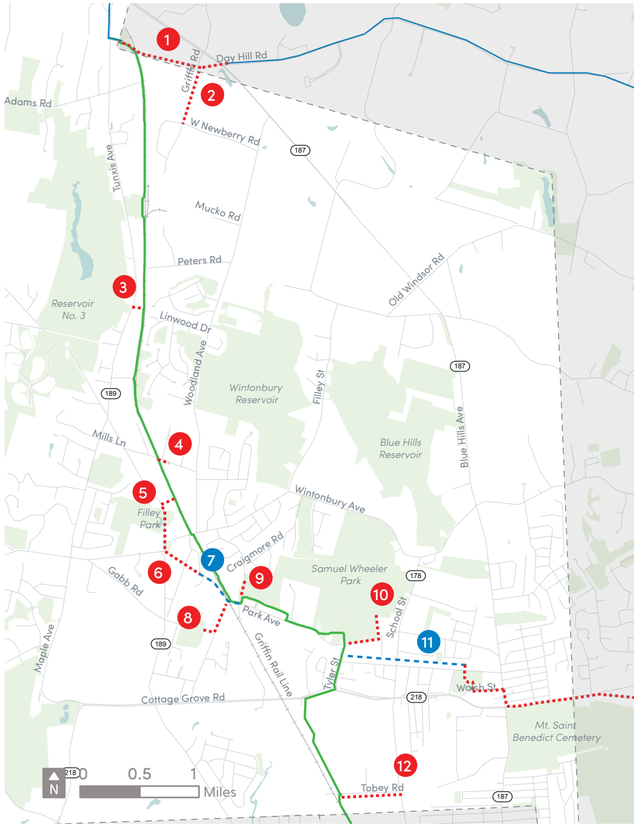
Bloomfield Community Connection

Municipal Boundary — Existing Trail — Potential Trail Link

Preferred Alignment — In Design Trail — # Key

Table 6: Bloomfield Potential Trail Links

Key	Connection
1	Connection to Windsor via existing bike lanes
2	Potential sidepath on west side of Griffin Rd to connect to job centers
3	Potential spur to Reservoir #3 including trailhead through power line corridor
4	Fill in 150-ft sidewalk gap on north side of Mills Ln to Pond Side Rd to access Mill Pond Condominiums
5	Potential spur to connect to Filley Pond Plaza shopping area (450 ft), Filley Park, and various open space and shopping
6	Connection to Town Center including the Bloomfield Town Green, public library, Town Hall, and future accommodations of Town's proposed transportation master plan for the downtown area
7	Proposed Bloomfield Greenway and East Coast Greenway preferred alignment (Town Center-High School) selected in 2020 LOTCIP solicitation
8	Connection to CREC Museum Academy
9	Extend path along Crestview Drive to Bloomfield High School entrance
10	Spur trail links the route to the Metacomet School
11	Proposed Bloomfield Greenway (Tyler Street to Rockwell Park), selected in 2024 LOTCIP solicitation. Trolley Trail connection through Rockwell Park to Blue Hills Avenue and Windsor town line (see Connection #13 on page 98)
12	Connection to Granby Street



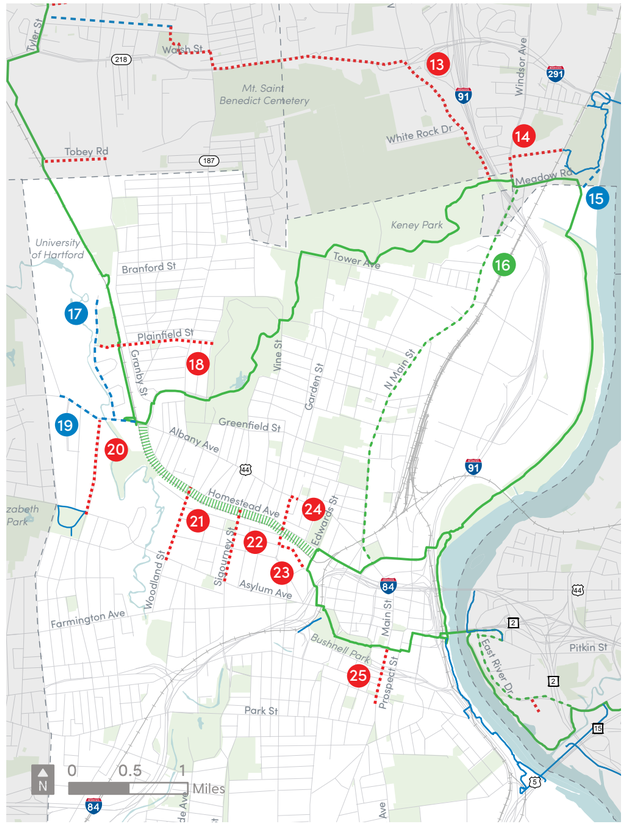
Hartford Community Connection

Municipal Boundary · Interim Route · Potential Trail Link
Preferred Alignment · Existing Trail · # Key
Pending Final Design · In Design Trail

Table 7: Hartford Potential Trail Links

Key	Connection
13	Connection to Keney Park and ECG route from Windsor (see Connection #11 on page 97)
14	Potential spur trail to Windsor Meadows State Park
15	Planned connection from the Riverfront Recapture future park
16	Interim flood route and proposed sidepath upgrade
17	Planned sidepath to Village at Park River and Annie Fischer School
18	Connection along Plainfield St to Keney Park
19	Planned sidepath along Albany Avenue
20	Potential improved connection along Scarborough St towards Elizabeth Park
*21**	Connection from Griffin/Homestead corridor to Woodland St
*22**	Connection from Griffin/Homestead corridor to Sigourney St
*23**	Connection from Griffin/Homestead corridor to Fraser Pl
24	Connection to YMCA via Garden St
25	Potential sidepath upgrade along Main St

Note: * Future coordination expected for final design south of Albany Avenue. Proposed facility pending further coordination with CTDOT and City of Hartford.

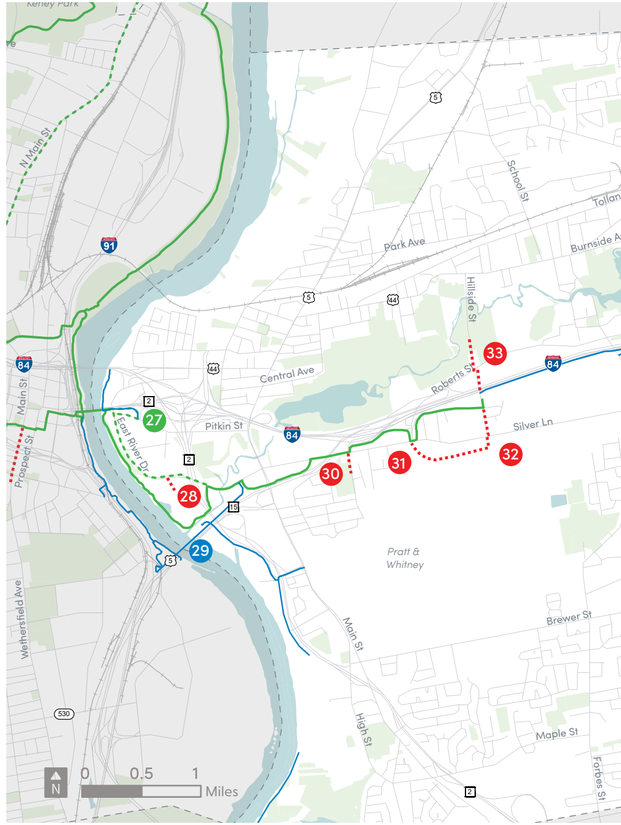


East Hartford Community Connection

Municipal Boundary · Existing Trail · Potential Trail Link
Preferred Alignment · In Design Trail · # Key
Interim Route

Table 8: East Hartford Potential Trail Links

Key	Connection
27	Interim flood route and accessible connection to Great River Park
28	Connection to Two Rivers Magnet Middle School
29	Existing trail to southern Great River Park trails and Goodwin University
30	Connection to Silver Lane Elementary School at Silver Lane/Mercer Avenue signalized crossing
31	Potential improved connection to Silver Lane and at-grade crossing
32	Spur trail to Rentschler Field via Simmons Rd
33	Spur trail to Hockanum River Linear Park trails via Hillside St



Potential Funding Sources

In addition to local investments, there are several state and federal grant programs appropriate for greenway facilities. The following funding sources have previously supported design and construction for similar projects, and the identified segments of the Preferred Alignment would be eligible under these programs to advance design and construction.

Federal

ATIIP

The Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP) focuses on projects that promote walking, biking, and other forms of active transportation and connect two or more communities to enhance their overall transportation network. Projects should improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of active transportation networks and communities. FHWA manages the program.

BUILD Grant Program

The USDOT Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant program supports surface transportation infrastructure projects that will have a significant local or regional impact. Planning and capital projects are eligible for BUILD grants, including intermodal projects and projects that will acquire right-of-way. There are eligibility requirements for award sizes if the project is within an urban area, Area of Persistent Poverty, or a Historically Disadvantaged Community.

CMAQ Program

The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program assists State and local governments for transportation projects to help meet the requirements of the Clean Air Act. The CMAQ program aims to reduce vehicle source emissions to improve air quality. FHWA manages the program, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities are eligible projects.

TA Program

The Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program provides federal funds to improve safety, accessibility, and connectivity for pedestrians, bicyclists, and non-motorized transportation users. CTDOT and CRCOG oversee the program to support projects for design, right-of-way, and construction activities.

State

LOTCIP

CRCOG manages the Local Transportation Capital Improvements Program (LOTCIP) to provide State funds to municipalities for transportation projects of regional significance. Eligible projects include multi-use trails for design and construction. Projects are rated on a pre-determined criteria including environmental and complete street components, amongst other factors.

Recreational Trails Program

The Recreational Trails Program provides funds to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both nonmotorized and motorized recreational trail uses. Eligible projects include planning, design, construction, maintenance, and outreach related to multi-use trails and bike paths. The RTP is an FHWA assistance program and administered by CT DEEP.

Community Connectivity Grant Program

The Community Connectivity Grant Program (CCGP) is developed by CTDOT and provides construction funding to municipalities for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements. The goal of the CCPG is to provide equitable levels of access to transportation by making conditions safer for people of all ages to walk, bike, and use public transportation. Funds can only be used for construction activities.

Local

At the local level, the municipalities may advance the greenway as it supports their overall bicycle and pedestrian networks and planning. In general, bicycle and pedestrian improvements may be included as part of other infrastructure and development projects where funds are available. The ECG should be coordinated with related projects along the Preferred Alignment to accommodate facilities and make community connections.

Implementation Plan

Permitting Considerations

Depending on the type of funding received, the design phase would trigger several required permits and further environmental review. For instance, the Preferred Alignment includes some small sections through wetlands and floodplains that would require state permits. Federal funding also triggers the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and requires the federal agency to assess environmental topics for potential effects. For example, right-of-way acquisitions often initiate a review of historic and cultural resources. The following environmental topics and permits may be assessed during the design phase:

- CTDEEP Water Quality Certification: Section 401
- CTDEEP Flood Management Certification
- CTDEEP Inland Wetland General Permit (assuming over 5,000 sf of wetland impact)
- CTDEEP General Stormwater Discharge
- Section 4(f)
- Section 6(f)
- Section 106
- 100-year Floodplain or Floodways
- DEEP NDDB and USFWS listed species

Opinion of Probable Cost

The opinion of probable cost for the Preferred Alignment is a preliminary estimate of design and construction costs across the study area. The costs were calculated based on the main sections defined for each municipality, as presented in the ***Preferred Alignment*** chapter. The estimated costs are derived from the base cost for development plus major infrastructure items required for each section. In general, the base cost reflects the length and width of the proposed path.

Bloomfield

In Bloomfield North, the cost estimate includes the 10-foot wide trail from Day Hill Road to Park Avenue plus infrastructure items, such as RRFBs, an upgraded railroad gate at Route 178, and fencing along the approximate 3.8-mile long RWT. In Bloomfield South, the cost estimate includes the 10-foot wide shared use path and sidepath for approximately 2.4 miles with traffic signal modifications, as well as a new 50-foot long bridge over Beaman's Brook along Park Avenue.

Hartford

Assuming a RWT configuration through Hartford, the average cost per mile for RWT segments is conservatively estimated between $1.6 to $2.0 million. This base cost was originally calculated as part of the Feasibility Memo for development of a 14-foot trail. The RWT south of Plainfield Street from Albany Avenue is more complex and includes major structure items within the rail corridor, including two culvert tunnels, trail bridge, and boardwalk section.

Outside of the Griffin Line corridor, the cost of new sections of trail within the Hartford Downtown and Park sections were also estimated. The cost from Edwards Street to Constitution Plaza assumes existing bike lanes would be upgraded to a 10-foot sidepath. The existing trail through Bushnell Park and Constitution Plaza are completed and not included in the cost. From Edwards Street to Market Street, the cost estimate also assumes existing bike lanes would be upgraded to a 10-foot sidepath. The ongoing Riverlink project to construct a new bridge over I-91 is not included in the cost.

Moreover, the Park section is mostly in design as part of ongoing Riverfront Recapture and City of Hartford projects. The new sections of trail run from Albany Avenue to Tower Avenue. It is assumed existing bike lanes and park roads would be upgraded to a shared use path.

East Hartford

In East Hartford, major infrastructure items include the shared use path and boardwalk along I-84, fencing, guiderails, concrete barrier, and relocation of the noise wall. At the time of the study, the proposed culvert under Roberts Street was included in the total cost estimate with the $1.5 million unit price. Following the municipal endorsement, the East Hartford Town Council preferred that the proposed culvert at Roberts Street and Silver Lane should be eliminated with continued access through the existing crosswalk at Roberts Street and Silver Lane. The intersection may require additional evaluation and design for safety enhancements and traffic operations.

Table 9 on page 102 outlines the opinions of probable cost for the three municipalities. The key corresponds to the map on page 103.

Table 9: Cost Estimate Summary (for planning purposes only)

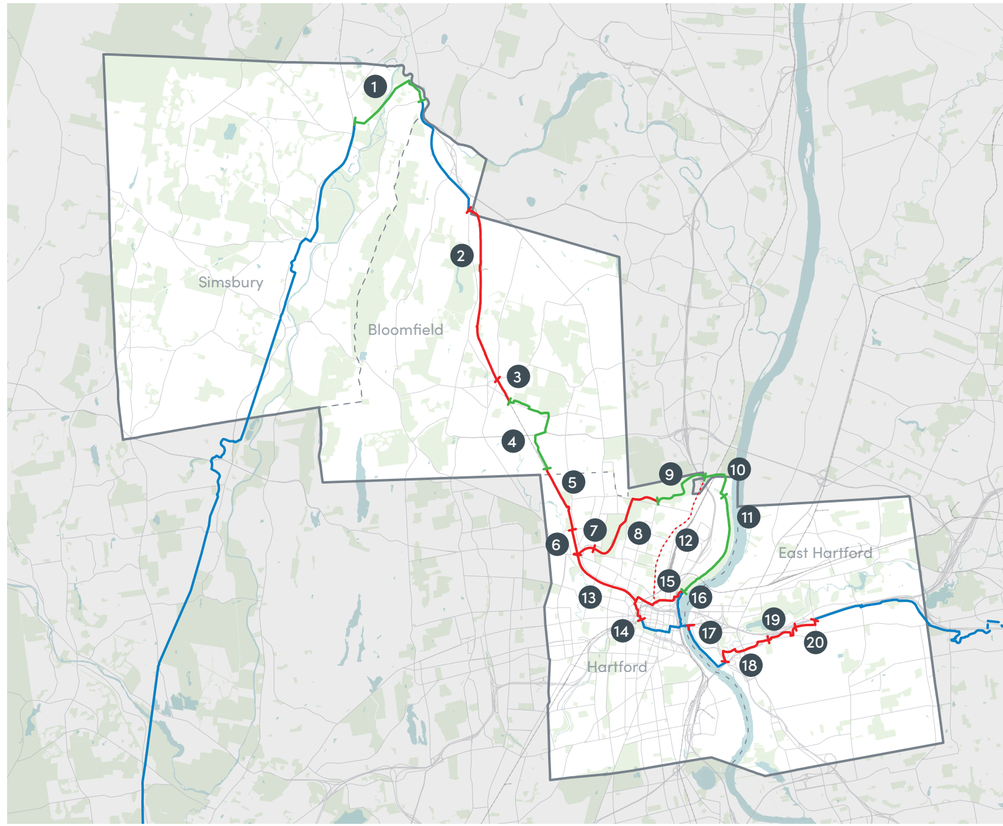
Municipality	Location	Proposed Facility	Key	Length (mi)	Cost (millions)	Avg. Cost/mi
Bloomfield North	Day Hill Rd to Park Ave	RWT	2-3	3.8	$9.9	2.6
Bloomfield South	Park Ave to Tobey Rd (previous alignment)	Mixed - shared use path and 10-foot sidepath	4	2.4	$7.1	3.0
Total				***6.2***	***$17.0***	***2.7***
Municipality	**Location**	**Proposed Facility**	**Key**	**Length (mi)**	**Cost (millions)**	**Avg. Cost/mi**
Hartford Griffin Line	Tobey Rd to Plainfield St	RWT	5	1.3	$4.9	3.8
*Hartford Downtown**	Plainfield St to Garden St	RWT	6, 13	1.7	$29.5	17.4
Hartford Downtown	South - Edwards St to Founders Bridge	Mixed - shared use path and 10-foot sidepath	14	0.5	$2.6	5.2
Hartford Downtown	North - Edwards St to Market St	Mixed - shared use path and 10-foot sidepath	15	0.75	$4.0	5.3
Hartford Park	Albany Ave to Tower Ave	Mixed - shared use path and 10-foot sidepath	7-8	2.7	$6.9	2.6
Total				***6.95***	***$47.9***	***6.9***
Municipality	**Location**	**Proposed Facility**	**Key**	**Length (mi)**	**Cost (millions)**	**Avg. Cost/mi**
East Hartford	Founders Bridge to Charter Oak Greenway	Mixed - shared use path and 10-foot sidepath	17-20	3.6	$13.3	3.7
*East Hartford**	Roberts St crossing	Proposed Culvert	--	--	$1.5	unit cost
Total				***3.6***	***$13.3***	***3.7***

Note: * Proposed facility pending further coordination with CTDOT and municipality. Included in total for purposes of this study.

PRELIMINARY PROBABLE COST ANALYSIS: In providing a preliminary analysis of probable costs, the Client understands that Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc. dba FHI Studio (FHI) has no control over the cost or availability of labor, equipment, or materials, or over market conditions, and that FHI's opinions of probable construction costs are made on the basis of their professional judgment, experience, and publicly available information on the existing site conditions. This analysis is provided for information purposes for comparing programming design alternatives and should not be considered an engineer's preliminary design estimate.

Implementation Status of the Preferred Alignment

- Study Area
- Municipal Boundary
- Complete
- Ongoing
- Remaining
- Remaining (Interim)
- # Key



N 0 1.5 3 Mile

Trail Status

Table 10 summarizes ongoing and remaining segments of the Preferred Alignment. The table and key corresponds with the map on page 103.

The Preferred Alignment builds off prior projects within the Study Area to coordinate trail planning efforts. Since the start of the study, projects have been initiated in Simsbury (#1) and Bloomfield (#4) to further trail design and advance the East Coast Greenway as a result of this study. Ongoing projects are highlighted in the table below.

In the Status column below, "Not Initiated" segments include the anticipated timeline to initiate work after this study: short-term (ST) in 1-2 years; medium-term (MT) in 3-5 years; and long-term (LT) in 5+ years. The On-Road Route column recommends routes to maintain continuity while segments are constructed in phases.

Schedule

For the remaining sections of trail to be completed, segments can be phased as individual projects. Each segment may follow general steps for completion:

- Year 1 - Project Development Phase
- Year 2 and 3 - Design Phase
- Year 4 and 5 - Construction Phase

The lead agency, funding, and scope of work would be determined during the project development phase. It is estimated the design and construction phases would each take up to two years to complete. Depending on the level of complexity, design, permitting, and construction could require more time.

Table 10: Preferred Alignment Trail Status

Key	Location	Proposed Facility	Status	Lead	Funding	Next Steps	On-Road Route
1	FCHT to Tariffville-Bloomfield Connector	Mixed - shared use path and bridge	Project Development	CTDOT/ Town of Simsbury	TA	Design final trail for the ECG; pursue design and construction grants for bridge segment	Tariffville Rd
2	Day Hill Rd to Wintonbury Ave	RWT Southwest	Not Initiated (LT)	CTDOT/ Town of Bloomfield		Pursue design and construction grants; coordinate rail operator agreement and design regulations	Tunxis Ave
3	Wintonbury Ave to Park Ave	RWT Northeast	Not Initiated (LT)	CTDOT/ Town of Bloomfield		Pursue design and construction grants; coordinate rail operator agreement and design regulations	Tunxis Ave
4	Park Ave to Tobey Rd	Mixed - shared use path and 10-foot sidepath	In Design	Town of Bloomfield	TA	Design final trail for the ECG	Park Ave
5	Tobey Rd to Plainfield St	RWT Northeast	Not Initiated (MT)	CTDOT/City of Hartford		Pursue design and construction grants; coordinate rail operator agreement and design regulations	Granby St
6	Plainfield St to Albany Ave	RWT Southwest	Not Initiated (MT)	CTDOT/City of Hartford		Pursue design and construction grants; coordinate rail operator agreement and design regulations	Mark Twain Dr
7	Albany Ave to Westbourne Pkwy	10-foot sidepath	Not Initiated (ST)	CTDOT/City of Hartford		Pursue design and construction grants	Westbourne Pkwy
8	Westbourne Pkwy to Tower Ave	Shared use path	Not Initiated (ST)	City of Hartford		Determine route to accommodate the ECG; pursue design and construction grants for trail upgrades	Keney Park existing trail/shared roadway

Table 10: Preferred Alignment Trail Status cont.

Key	Location	Proposed Facility	Status	Lead	Funding	Next Steps	On-Road Route
9	Tower Ave to Windsor Ave	Mixed - shared use path and trail upgrades	Project Development	City of Hartford	RTP	Determine route to accommodate the ECG; pursue design and construction grants for trail upgrades	Keney Park existing trail/shared roadway
10	Riverfront Recapture's Future Park	Shared use path	In Design	Riverfront Recapture	RTP	Coordinate trail design to accommodate the ECG	N Main St to Riverlink
11	Joe Marfuggi Riverwalk	Shared use path	In Design	CTDOT/ Riverfront Recapture	TA	Coordinate trail design to accommodate the ECG	N Main St to Riverlink
12	N Main St	Separated bike lane	Not Initiated (ST)	City of Hartford		Pursue design and construction grants	N Main St
13	Albany Ave to Edwards St	RWT Southwest/ Homestead Avenue redesign	Not Initiated (LT)	CTDOT/City of Hartford		Determine facility type; pursue design and construction grants; coordinate rail operator agreement and design regulations	Homestead Ave
14	Edwards St to Gold St	10-foot sidepath and intersection upgrades	Not Initiated (ST)	City of Hartford		Pursue design and construction grants; coordinate ROW	Myrtle St and Spruce St
15	Edwards to Market St (Riverlink)	10-foot sidepath and streetscape enhancement	In Design	iQuilt/City of Hartford		Coordinate sidepath design to accommodate the ECG	Bushnell Park to Mortensen Riverfront Plaza
16	Route I-91 Bridge (Riverlink)	Ramp at Pleasant St and Market St to Riverside Park	In Design	CTDOT/City of Hartford		Coordinate ramp design to accommodate the ECG	Bushnell Park to Mortensen Riverfront Plaza
17	East River Dr	Separated bike lane	Not Initiated (ST)	CTDOT/ Town of East Hartford		Pursue design and construction grants; coordinate ROW	East River Dr
18	Riverfront Trail to Silver Lane/Mercer Avenue	Mixed - shared use path and 10-foot sidepath. Route 15 ramp restriping	Not Initiated (MT)	CTDOT/ Town of East Hartford		Pursue design and construction grants; coordinate ROW	Pitkin St to East River Dr
19	Mercer Avenue/I-84 to Clement Road	Shared use path and intersection upgrades	Not Initiated (MT)	CTDOT/ Town of East Hartford		Evaluate intersection upgrades at Roberts Street and Silver Lane; pursue design and construction grants; coordinate ROW	Main St to Brewer St
20	Clement Road to Simmons Road	10-foot sidepath	Not Initiated (ST)	CTDOT/ Town of East Hartford		Pursue design and construction grants; coordinate ROW	Clement Rd or Silver Ln