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**Oxford Main Street Committee Announces Public Information Meeting
and Seeks Public Input on the Oxford Route 67 Alternative Transportation Study**

The Oxford Main Street Project (OMSP) Committee has announced a virtual public meeting on October 8th at 7pm to hear about plans and progress along Route 67, and to provide input about ongoing projects. You can find meeting specifics at www.nvcogct.gov/event/oxfordmainstreet. The OMSP Committee has been working to make the Route 67 and Little River corridor pedestrian and bicycle friendly, and to provide better access to the businesses and natural resources throughout the corridor. In order to better inform and engage with the public on their progress, the committee has kicked off a new project visibility campaign to include enhanced public outreach and opportunities for residents to provide feedback. The Committee has started a new Facebook group that has grown to over 250 members, and residents are encouraged to join. Information about the OMSP Committee can be found at www.oxford-ct.gov/main-street-project-committee.

The OMSP Committee is overseeing the Oxford Route 67 Alternative Transportation Study that will be highlighted at the October 8th Meeting. The Study is building on the committee's prior work to develop a cohesive plan for the entire corridor to better enable the Town to plan, prioritize, and fund future improvements. The planning study is being funded by the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG) with federal transportation planning funds and is being conducted by TranSystems Corporation, a planning and engineering consultant with offices in Meriden, CT. The study is expected to be completed in Summer, 2021, when a report detailing final recommendations will be published.

Throughout the spring and summer, study partners collected and analyzed information about the existing conditions in the corridor, and they have begun investigating potential bicycle, pedestrian and transit improvements. The focus of these potential improvements will be to improve connections and transportation options to the Seymour sidewalk network, train station and Naugatuck River Greenway Trail to the south, and the Larkin Bridle Trail to the north, as well as to all of the businesses, services, green spaces, and residential areas within the corridor. The potential for transit service is also being investigated, focusing on connections to services and major residential and commercial centers and to surrounding communities.

While the Covid-19 Pandemic has altered public outreach for the study, there will still be numerous opportunities for residents and businesses to provide input. Public input will be gathered at and following the Virtual public Meeting on October 8th and comments can be left at any time through the study webpage at www.nvcogct.gov/oxfordroute67. Residents and business owners are also encouraged to complete a short survey that can be found on the webpage.

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Oxford prioritized creating more of a downtown feel along Route 67 in the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development. Unlike many of its neighbors, Oxford does not have a typical walkable New England downtown or Main Street. Instead, municipal and commercial areas are dispersed along with residences along State Route 67. Although Route 67 is fundamentally Oxford's "Main Street," it currently has no sidewalks or any safe bicycle or pedestrian access, and traffic speeds can be excessive with no visual cues to alert motorists that they are driving through an area where they may encounter walkers or bicyclists. In addition, no public transit is operated along Route 67 that could provide residents an alternative transportation option. Transit options by train on Metro North and by bus on CT Transit are available only one mile from the Oxford town line, but there is currently no way for Oxford residents to safely access these services without a personal motor vehicle.

Kathleen O'Neil, Oxford Grant Administrator and Chair of the Oxford Main Street Committee explained that "Oxford residents have said they want pedestrian and bicycle access along the Little River and Route 67. We are very excited to share progress toward that goal, and to give the public a chance to help guide and contribute to future work".

Discussing the Oxford Route 67 Alternative Transportation Study, TranSystems Project Manager Casey Hardin said that, "This is a tremendous opportunity to build off the excellent work that the Oxford Main Street Committee has completed over the last several years. We are aiming to create a multimodal master plan for the corridor that can encourage sustainable transportation and growth in the Town for years to come."