



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**



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NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06131-7546**

October 13, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary of Transportation  
United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**Re: NVCOG Reconnecting Communities Pilot Grant Program  
CONSERVE8: Connecting Neighborhoods to Stimulate Economic Revitalization,  
Vitality, and Equity across Connecticut Route 8**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) is pleased to support the application submitted by the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG), Connecticut, under the U.S. Department of Transportation's FY 2022 Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Discretionary Grant Program for the *CONSERVE8: Connecting Neighborhoods to Stimulate Economic Revitalization, Vitality, and Equity across Connecticut Route 8 Project*.

Funding from the RCP grant program would be utilized by NVCOG to conduct a comprehensive planning study to assess the impacts construction of the Route 8 Expressway has had and continues to have on the communities and neighborhoods through which it passes.

Built over a span of 35 years beginning in the early 1950s, Route 8 was intended to improve traffic to, from and between the cities and towns within the Naugatuck Valley, most of which at the time were robust industrial centers with compact downtown areas that were the center of local commercial and social activity. The new highway also connected two of Connecticut's largest cities: Bridgeport at the south of the expressway and Waterbury located at its midpoint. Because of this focus on connecting cities, Route 8 was aligned through the downtown areas and effectively split neighborhoods and became a barrier to inter-neighborhood mobility.

The proposed project will document how the highway divided vibrant communities and determine the deleterious effects it had on these areas, especially related to their economic development, land use and social fabric. This planning effort will identify feasible and strategic actions to reconnect these neighborhoods and communities. Mitigation project will focus on and address psychological barriers of the highway by enhancing micro-mobility (pedestrian, bicycle, e-assisted devices, and transit) opportunities and connections between the areas separated by Route 8. These actions will help transform neighborhoods that have been burdened for many years by the decision to build the expressway; many of these areas have been traditionally underserved by transportation actions, historically disadvantaged and are areas of persistent poverty.

NVCOG has established the strong working partnerships necessary for general project development with CTDOT, the Connecticut Metropolitan Council of Governments (MetroCOG), and the Northwest Hills Council of Governments. NVCOG also serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Waterbury urban area and is the co-agency with MetroCOG for the Greater Bridgeport-Valley MPO. The project team represents three of the nine state-created regional planning organizations that carry out a variety of planning activities for the municipalities within each respective region. This multi-regional approach will result in an integrated and comprehensive plan of action that will transform the Route 8 corridor from one where neighborhoods are divided and disconnected to one that has been reknit together and become a more cohesive whole.

CTDOT strongly supports NVCOG's efforts to advance this project and encourages your favorable consideration for funding under the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program.

Your agency's time and consideration of this proposal is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph L. Giulietti". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joseph" being the most prominent.

Joseph L. Giulietti  
Commissioner