

Preliminary Draft
Categorical Exclusion
W.A.T.E.R
Waterbury Active Transportation and Economic
Resurgence

FEDERAL CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

Prepared pursuant to 23 CFR 771.117(d)
For

W.A.T.E.R. Waterbury Active Transportation and Economic Resurgence

Waterbury, Connecticut

A Joint Document

City of Waterbury

In Cooperation with

The Connecticut Department of Transportation and
The Federal Highway Administration

April 2014

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1. OVERVIEW

Projects or actions that do not have significant effects on the human and natural environment may be categorically excluded from the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). Categorical Exclusions (CATEX) include actions which do not induce significant impacts to planned growth or land use in the area, do not require the relocation of significant numbers of people, and do not involve significant impacts to any natural, cultural, recreational, historic, community or other resource. The action must not have significant impacts to air, noise, or water quality or have significant impact on travel patterns. There are three types of CATEXs recognized by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA):

- **Type 1 CATEXs:** Type 1 CATEX activities are identified in 23 CFR 771.117(c). These types of activities automatically qualify as being categorically excluded from the requirements of NEPA.
- **Programmatic CATEXs:** These activities are categorically excluded based on agreements that have been established between state transportation departments/agencies and the FHWA. These agreements identify projects that are commonplace in that state and which typically involve minor and insignificant resource impacts.
- **CATEXs that require technical studies and/or resource analyses and public outreach (Documented CATEX):** These involve project actions that may be categorically excluded from the requirements of NEPA if certain criteria are met and if the documentation demonstrates that there are no significant impacts resulting from the action. The types of project actions in this category are actions not included in Type 1 or Programmatic CATEXs.

The **Proposed Action** evaluated in this document is the WATER project. This Proposed Action does not qualify as a Type 1 or a Programmatic CATEX. Results of technical studies and resource analyses conducted for the Proposed Action and reported herein, clearly demonstrate that the Proposed Action would not have significant social, cultural, or environmental impacts. Therefore, the Proposed Action is categorically excluded from the requirements of NEPA.

Due to the nature of resource impacts and the potential for property takings/land displacements, however, a Documented CATEX is required for the Proposed Action (described in Section 2 below) by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) and Federal Highway Administration.

In order to support a TIGER Grant application, this Preliminary Draft Documented CATEX has been prepared for the WATER Project which consists of the following five components:.

- The Naugatuck River Greenway Trail – Construction of the City of Waterbury’s second phase of a 44 mile regional system, including several neighborhood connections to the river and a preparation of a new riverfront park.

- Freight Street – Reconstruction of a deteriorated street of a formerly industrial corridor as a complete urban street that includes green infrastructure and a bicycle sidepath connecting the riverfront to the downtown.
- Jackson Street – Reconstruction of the existing dead-end street and extension through Freight Street to West Main Street to begin a street and block network for the redevelopment of the district
- Library Connector – Build a bridge from Library Park over Meadow Street and the railroad tracks with ramps to the train station and new riverfront park to improve access from the riverfront to the station and the downtown.
- Meadow Street – Extending the Freight Street bicycle path to the entrance of an improved train station waiting room and enhancing bicycle and pedestrian connections to the downtown by adding bike lanes, narrowing roadways, and expanding sidewalks.

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2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

2.1 PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of this project is to construct a connected greenway trail along the Naugatuck River in the City of Waterbury that would:

- Increase opportunities for multi-modal travel in the region;
- Provide recreation opportunities for residents and visitors;
- Promote healthy lifestyles;
- Encourage environmental stewardship;
- Increase property values adjoining the Naugatuck River;
- Complement and support retention of existing businesses and attraction of new businesses; and
- Reduce the region's dependence on fossil fuels for transportation.

2.2 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Several alternatives for the Proposed Action were evaluated in the *Waterbury Naugatuck River Greenway Routing and Feasibility Study* (Waterbury Development Corporation, February, 2010) (the Feasibility Study) and are described briefly below. In order to evaluate potential alternatives, the Greenway Advisory Committee (GAC) developed criteria to identify potential alignments. A scoring system was developed to help the project team to understand the relative value of potential alternatives so that trail solutions could be developed that were appropriate to local issues (e.g., economic development, multi-modal connections, community benefits, costs).

Option A: King's Mark ERT Recommended Alignment: The Environmental Review Team (ERT) report included a text description of a potential route; the consulting team illustrated this as a baseline alternative. This alternative emphasized the experience of the river as a natural corridor and shows the trail switching sides of the river at several locations.

Option B: East River Bank Alignment: This concept showed a continuous trail on the east bank between downtown and the river. This route provides important connections to downtown, the proposed Waterbury Intermodal Transportation Center and other destinations in the center of the city. The East Bank option was included as a concept in the CTDOT preliminary plans for future reconstruction of the Mixmaster (I-84 interchange with Route 8).

Option C: West River Bank Alignment: This option considered a shared-use path along the west side of the river, primarily between Route 8 and the river's bank. South of the City wastewater treatment plant, the Greenway would become a "rail-with-trail" configuration.

Option D: Roadway Corridor Alignment: This alternative looked at locating the trail within existing public road rights-of-way in order to assess if an on-road route could reduce the challenges associated with land acquisition in the corridor.

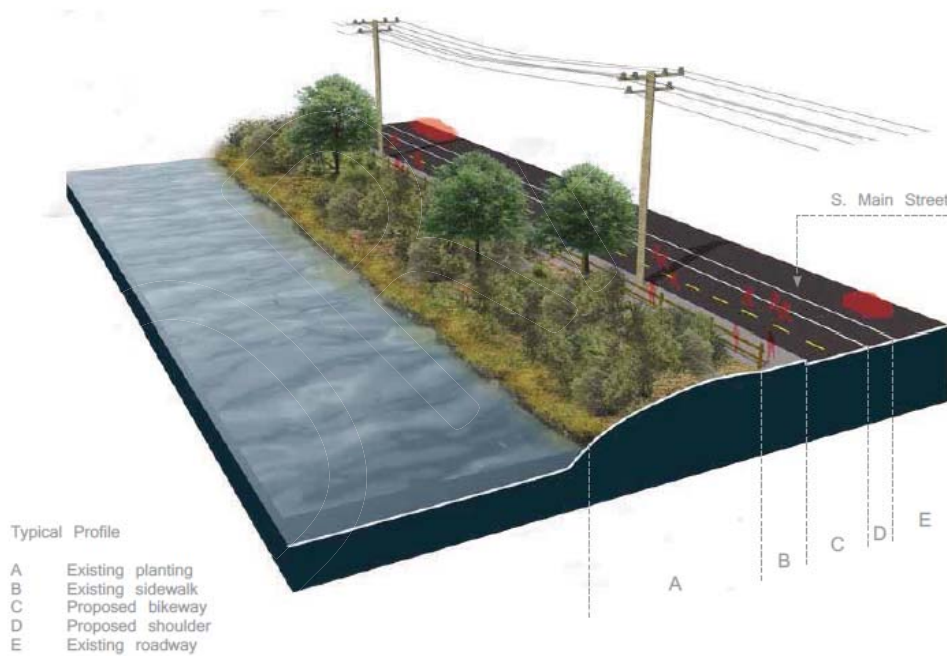
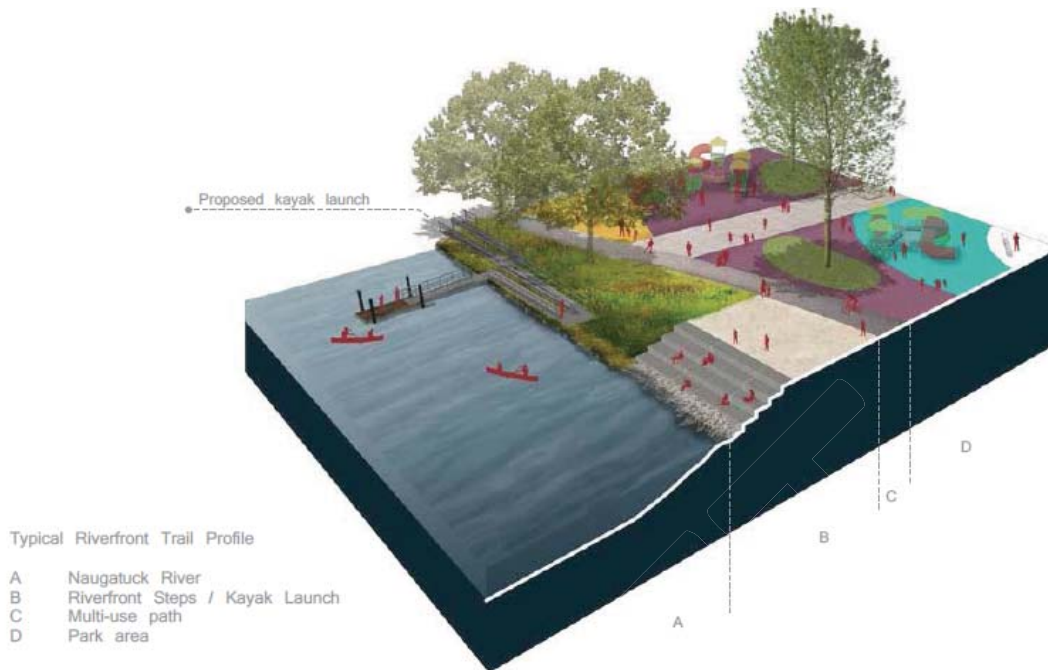
Option E: Hybrid Greenway Alignment: This alternative integrated concepts identified in the first four routing options. The hybrid route features a trail that is as close to the river as possible, while also utilizing some short on-roadway segments based on opportunities and constraints. This alternative maximized connectivity, safety, economic development potential and met the other factors identified in the study criteria.

Option F: River Loop Alignment: This option is a long-term vision to create a continuous trail along both sides of the river. This option could be developed in phases as opportunities become available to complement the primary alignment and to create a trail system that would connect the entire river corridor.

2.3 PROPOSED ACTION

Option E: Hybrid Greenway Alignment was identified as the Proposed Action among the alternatives considered. It is an extension of the first phase of the greenway project, and effectively serves as Phase 2. It is the second of six sections proposed for construction over the next three to five years. The overall length of the Naugatuck River greenway in Waterbury would be 7.7 miles. The Proposed Action would include the 2.3 mile greenway segment from Eagle Street to the south to West Main Street to the north. Based on input from the City, Option E: Hybrid Greenway was modified to also include improved connections between the river, greenway, and the train station and Downtown Waterbury (see page 5 for description of each of the five components).

The Proposed Action would primarily be an off-road multi-use path aligned along the edge of the Naugatuck River. The off-road path would require construction of a new crossing/bridge across the Mad River. The Proposed Action would also include improvements (e.g. curbs, sidewalks, shared paths, bioswales) to three roadways, as well as a new bicycle/pedestrian bridge over Meadow Street, all of which would provide improved connections between the river, proposed greenway, train station and Downtown Waterbury. Sample potential greenway cross-sections are shown below.



As mentioned earlier, a new park is envisioned as part of the Proposed Action stretching along the banks of the Naugatuck River. This 9-acre Waterbury Greenway Riverfront Park (the Riverfront Park), would be bounded by Jackson Street to the east, Bank Street to the south, McDermid Electronics to the north, and the Naugatuck River to the west. This land is currently owned by Yankee Gas and CTDOT. Planned recreational uses include walking trails, athletic fields, picnic areas, playground, and a kayak launch.

3. PUBLIC OUTREACH

As part of the development of the Feasibility Study an extensive outreach process was conducted to obtain feedback and input from the general public, elected officials, and other stakeholders on the planning and routing of the Proposed Action. The public outreach process included the following:

- Greenway Advisory Committee (GAC) – was assembled to provide guidance on the planning process and feedback on technical deliverables. Meetings with this committee were held regularly over the nine-month planning process.
- Community Workshops – two workshops were held at key milestones in the planning process. More than 100 people attended each meeting with attendees including members of the general public, the Mayor of the City of Waterbury, other elected officials, and key members of Waterbury’s business and non-profit communities. Each meeting included a presentation as well as break-out groups so that participants could have more focused discussions about specific aspects of the greenway.
- Project Website – was maintained throughout the nine-month planning process. The website contained agendas from community meetings, PDF versions of meeting/workshop presentations and relevant articles about the greenway planning. The website also contained an interactive feature where site visitors could link to an online survey to answer questions regarding the City of Waterbury, their neighborhood and certain amenities they would like to see along the greenway.

PENDING ACTIVITIES

- Agency scoping meeting to get concurrence on permits needed and impacts
- Additional meetings with the GAC as the CatX is completed and the design progresses
- Continue to maintain the project website during design and until the Proposed Action is completed and operational

4. EXISTING CONDITIONS AND IMPACTS

4.1 TRAFFIC, TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

Within the study corridor, certain sections of the greenway would be sited within the rights-of-way of existing roadways, in locations where conditions do not allow the trail to be located within its own easement along the river. This could potentially occur on:

- South Main Street between Eagle Street and Glenn Street
- Washington Avenue just east of the bridge crossing over the Mad River
- West Liberty Street west of Benedict Street to Bank Street
- Bank Street between West Liberty and Jackson Street
- Riverside Street to West Main Street
- Riverside connector to Freight Street

These roadside alignment sections are shown in Appendix B of the Tiger grant application. In most cases, the roadside trail would consist of shared-use paths built adjacent to the roadway, separated by a crash barrier or a tree-lined buffer. In general these existing roadways are wide (36-44 foot widths) and have sufficient existing right-of-way to accommodate the new greenway segments without constraining traffic flow. In a few discrete areas, the greenway on these roadway alignments would consist of striped bike lanes and/or existing sidewalks.

There are numerous signalized intersections throughout the study corridor. New signal equipment with exclusive pedestrian phases would likely be required at all intersections where the greenway is located. Upgrades to the existing pedestrian crossing signal equipment could also be required at intersections that do not currently have exclusive pedestrian phases.

No adverse impacts to traffic and parking are anticipated. Beneficial effects of enhanced connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as to transit are expected.

PENDING FUTURE ANALYSES:

- Intersection operations analyses
- Traffic study

4.2 LAND ACQUISITION AND DISPLACEMENTS

Portions of the Proposed Action would pass by the rear lot line of some existing non-residential sites. It is anticipated that some strip taking in the form of easements across these properties would be necessary including a few locations for small parking lots and information kiosks. In general, the affected properties are industrial in use. This may occur in the following locations:

- Waterbury Buckle Corporation
- 60 Harvester Road – Roller Magic
- Old railroad ROW
- Anamet Site – Brownfields
- Hychko property
- Waterbury Avenue Business Park
- Wesson Energy Inc.
- Laidlaw Transit Company
- JRD Properties
- Yankee Gas property for Waterbury Greenway Riverfront Park

None of the strip takings would require acquisition of any building or business and none are expected to have any adverse impact on business operations. No impacts to any residences are anticipated and no displacements would occur. As such, no adverse impact in terms of land acquisition or displacements is expected.

PENDING FUTURE ANALYSIS:

- Quantification of potential strip takings

4.3 LAND USE AND ZONING

Existing land uses in the study corridor are a mix common to urban areas. They include industrial sites, office buildings and some retail, as well as some pockets of residential neighborhoods. The study area also has some redevelopment sites that are currently under study for revitalization. The most notable is the Anamet Brownfields site where the existing buildings are programmed for demolition. The river frontage where the alignment for the greenway is focused is entirely private property with few exceptions.

City of Waterbury zoning within the study area is classified for industrial use at the southwestern end and arterial commercial and central business district commercial uses north of the industrially-zoned areas. The arterial commercial areas are intended for a wide variety of retail and service commercial trade uses primarily accessed by vehicle. The central business district is intended to allow intensive development of a wide range of uses, including mixed residential, office, and retail uses, serving the entire City and the region.

Impacts to land use and zoning are considered to occur where a proposed action would disrupt the pattern of existing uses or introduce a new use that conflicts with the intended uses in the area. The Proposed Action would not conflict with existing land uses nor would it induce changes in overall land use patterns. It is expected to have an indirect beneficial effect on business vitality by enhancing access by alternate modes and encouraging improvement in the surrounding human-scale environment. Overall, no adverse impacts to land use or zoning are anticipated and some indirect beneficial effects could occur.

4.4 CONSISTENCY WITH STATE, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANS

The *City of Waterbury Plan of Conservation and Development* (November 9, 2005) has a goal to “promote safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle facilities in appropriate locations to meet existing and future demand.” It also has a goal to “provide every neighborhood with access to open space and recreation.” The policies associated with this include incorporating a riverfront greenway into all new developments along the Naugatuck River.

The *2008 Regional Plan of Conservation and Development for the Central Naugatuck Valley Region* encourages the provision of bikeways and walkways. It concludes that efforts should be focused on creating a “meaningful open space system” with priority given to the establishment of greenways, particularly those along river corridors such as the anticipated greenway along the Naugatuck River in Waterbury.

Connecticut’s State Plan was updated and adopted June 5, 2013 as the *Conservation & Development Policies Plan 2013-2018*. Under its Growth Management Principle #2, it encourages development of “a network of pedestrian and bicycle paths and greenways that provide convenient inter- and intra-town access, including access to the regional public transportation network”.

The Proposed Action is consistent with the local and regional plans. It is also consistent with the State Plan’s growth management principles.

4.5 AIR QUALITY

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for six air pollutants in the Clean Air Act and 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments. The standards aim to protect human health as well as public welfare. Primary standards set limits to protect public health, including the health of sensitive populations such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly. Secondary standards are set to protect public welfare, including protection against visibility impairment, damage to animals, crops, vegetation, and buildings. With the exception of sulfur dioxide, all criteria pollutants have secondary standards that are equal to the primary standards.

When air pollutant levels do not exceed the standard for each pollutant, a region is considered in attainment of the standards. If a monitor shows an exceedance to a pollutant's standard, the region is then classified as nonattainment for that pollutant and must develop a State Implementation Plan (SIP) to bring the region back to attainment status. The entire state of Connecticut is currently designated as being in attainment for carbon monoxide (CO). New Haven County, however, is classified as nonattainment for ozone as well as PM_{2.5}.

The Proposed Action would involve passive uses (walking, jogging, biking, fishing), and would not include motorized vehicles or watercraft of any kind. Additionally, the Proposed Action would decrease vehicle miles traveled on roadways within the City of Waterbury as enhanced connectivity for bicyclists and pedestrians would be provided. The Proposed Action is thus considered beneficial in terms of air quality; no adverse impacts to air quality are anticipated.

4.6 NOISE

An examination of Google mapping revealed that the majority of the land uses along the Proposed Action alignment are industrial or commercial. Potential sensitive noise receptors, or those land uses that may be more sensitive to fluctuations in noise levels, were identified in the following locations:

- Multi-family residential uses between South Main Street and Piedmont Street and Glen Street; at the corner of Benedict and West Liberty Street.
- Churches - The Unity Temple Church of God in Christ located on South Main Street; Riverbank Christian Worship Center on West Liberty Street;

Given the nature of the surrounding land uses and nature of activity associated with the Proposed Action, it is not anticipated that the Proposed Action would result in significant increases to existing noise levels. Temporary noise impacts may occur during construction. Nighttime construction would be limited to the extent possible to minimize construction noise impacts on neighborhoods

4.7 SECTION 106 RESOURCES

In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) that are within or immediately adjacent to the study corridor were identified through the National Park Service National Register GIS data. There is one

above ground historic property and three historic districts in the downtown area just east of the study corridor. These include Waterbury Union Station, the Waterbury Municipal Center Complex (also known as the Cass Gilbert National Register District), the Downtown Waterbury Historic District, and the Bank Street Historic District. In addition, there are two other resources on the NRHP; the Washington Avenue Bridge, at the south end of the corridor, is adjacent to a proposed pedestrian and bicycle bridge that is part of an alternate route for the greenway, and the Riverside Cemetery lies west of the river immediately south of I-84. Additional properties that are eligible for the National Register may be identified in consultation with the CT State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). It is not anticipated that any above ground historic properties would be adversely affected by the Proposed Action.

According to the review of the City of Waterbury GIS data as documented in the *Waterbury Naugatuck River Greenway Routing and Feasibility Study* (February, 2010; the Feasibility Study), there are no National Register listed archeological sites within the study corridor. However, an Archaeological Assessment Survey conducted as part of the Waterbury Naugatuck River Greenway project identified archeological resources along the corridor that are associated with historic industrial and residential uses. The study concluded that the potential is low for Pre-Contact Native American resources, but that there is the potential for prehistoric archeological resources, due to the proposed location of the greenway along the Naugatuck River. Archeological field testing would be necessary to confirm presence or absence of these resources.

PENDING ANALYSIS

- Consultation with the CT SHPO
- Consultation with the Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO)
- Investigate history of Anamet Site (potential historic significance)
- Further archaeological investigations

4.8 SECTION 4(F) RESOURCES

Section 4(f) of the 1996 Department of Transportation Act (49 USC 303) governs the use of land from any public park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or historic property listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Section 4(f) also governs the use of archaeological sites that are listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register if it has been determined by the official with jurisdiction that they warrant preservation in place. Section 4(f) prohibits federal transportation agencies from approving a project that uses land from a significant public park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or historic site, unless the agency determines that there is no feasible and prudent avoidance alternative to the use of that property and that the proposed project includes all feasible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from its use; or the agency determines that the use, including any measures to minimize harm, would ultimately have a minimal and insignificant adverse impact on the property.

There are limited Section 4(f) resources within or adjacent to the study corridor. Properties include Waterbury Union Station, the Bank Street Historic District, the Waterbury Municipal Center Complex, the Waterbury Downtown Historic District, Riverside Cemetery, the Washington Avenue Bridge, Library Park located between Grand Street and Meadow Street, and Dover Street Playground on Dover Street. Both parks are outside the study corridor but would have enhanced bicycle and

pedestrian access via the Freight Street Complete Streets corridor; they would be beneficially affected by this connectivity. It is not anticipated that Waterbury Union Station, the Bank Street Historic District, the Waterbury Downtown Historic District, the Waterbury Municipal Center Complex, Riverside Cemetery, and the Washington Avenue Bridge would be adversely affected by the Proposed Action.

The proposed Riverfront Park along Jackson Street with frontage on the Naugatuck River would be a Section 4(f) resource upon its development. The Proposed Action would complement and enhance this park. It would provide access to and through it, and create an opportunity to integrate river access and other recreational elements within the City. Consequently, the Proposed Action is anticipated to have a beneficial effect on Section 4(f) properties in the City of Waterbury.

PENDING ANALYSIS

- Consultation with the CT SHPO and THPO
- Investigate history of Anamet Site (potential historic significance)
- Further archaeological investigations

4.9 SECTION 6(F) RESOURCES

A review of the National Park Service website for the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act properties indicated that there are no Section 6(f) resources within the proposed project study area.

4.10 VISUAL/AESTHETICS

Visual resources and impacts to aesthetics were generally considered from the viewing perspective of those utilizing the proposed greenway and those living and working in the Proposed Action corridor. The Feasibility Study identified some prospective viewpoints and created some conceptual drawings of what the greenway might look like in those locales.

Existing visual and aesthetic resources in the Proposed Action corridor are varied, ranging from very natural settings to an urban commercial/industrial environment. The components can be described as follows:

- Natural environment of the Naugatuck and Mad rivers. The Naugatuck River is primarily vegetated; more so along its west bank and at north end of the proposed greenway
- Scenic view corridors up and down the Naugatuck River occur south of Spruce Brook Road and near Platts Mill Road; there are steep embankments in many places and a rapids near Platts Mill Road
- Views of pockets of cohesive residential neighborhoods with complementary scale structures of similar architecture throughout
- The views are interrupted and degraded by the rail lines and including abandoned rail tracks and debris along the tracks
- Views are also degraded by both active and abandoned industrial structures with a disparate mix of equipment and stored or discarded materials in their yards
- Roadways, surface parking lots and the adjacent highway (elevated portions) are dominant in the visual landscape in places

The Proposed Action visual landscape conditions are anticipated to include:

- Landscaped paths with user respite areas for both on- and off-road segments of the trail
- Wide, tree-lined riverfront esplanade (Anamet Connector)
- Rehabbed and new bridges, including pedestrian bridge crossing of Mad River to Washington Ave
- Waterbury Greenway Riverfront Park – visually connected to River; open lawn with rec fields and new playground
- Tree-lined streets (Freight Street Connector)

Overall, the impacts to visual conditions are anticipated to be beneficial due to greening of some city streets, extensive new park; and a greenway designed to capitalize on existing natural viewsheds along river.

PENDING ANALYSIS:

- Field review of vistas offered along the proposed greenway route, photography, and evaluation of point locations of scenic viewpoints.

4.11 PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY

The alignment of the Proposed Action is not anticipated to adversely impact access for emergency services vehicles.

PENDING ANALYSIS

- Evaluation of safety and security for greenway users and security of properties along the greenway perimeter to be conducted upon completion of preliminary design including provisions for lighting, fencing, other constraints on access to private property, emergency vehicle access to the greenway, and other potential greenway user safety elements, such as emergency call boxes.

4.12 ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE AREAS AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

A review of the Natural Diversity Database (NDDDB) information from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's (CT DEEP) and as documented in the Feasibility Study indicates there are no threatened or endangers species within the Proposed Action corridor. The current NDDDB information suggests the potential presence along the east side of the Naugatuck River near Freight Street. The alignment of the Proposed Action would need to be reviewed with CT DEEP to gain an understanding of potential impacts. Given the nature of the Proposed Action, however, it is anticipated that it would not adversely impact ecologically sensitive areas and/or federally- or state-listed endangered species.

PENDING ANALYSIS

- Formal coordination with the CT DEEP is required to determine the presence of federally- or state-listed endangered species or species of concern.

4.13 WETLANDS

Based on CT DEEP GIS data available for the study corridor, there are no federal or state jurisdictional wetlands in the project study area; therefore, no impacts to wetlands are anticipated. This desktop analysis would need to be confirmed by a certified soil scientist.

PENDING ANALYSIS

- A certified soil scientist to conduct a formal field wetland investigation of the full Naugatuck River Greenway alignment. If there are wetlands, they would need to be delineated and impacts evaluated. If there are impacts to wetlands, a municipal wetland permit application would be sought through the City's Inland Wetland & Watercourses Commission.

4.14 WATER RESOURCES/WATER QUALITY

The Naugatuck River and the Mad River are located within the Proposed Action corridor. According to the *2012 State of Connecticut Integrated Water Quality Report* (CTDEEP, December, 2012) Within the City of Waterbury, both of these rivers are classified as Class A waters by CT DEEP yet are not supporting for recreation and aquatic habitat (are impaired) uses due to elevated bacteria levels. The Proposed Action would be a paved surface, thereby adding impervious surface to the banks of the Naugatuck River.

Activities along the Proposed Action and within the Naugatuck and Mad Rivers would be passive in nature and would not involve motorized vehicles or watercraft of any kind. Therefore, the Proposed Action is not anticipated to impact water resources or water quality.

Temporary construction impacts may occur along the Naugatuck and Mad Rivers from the construction of the trail itself, parking areas, kayak launches, and pedestrian footbridges. To mitigate potential surface water quality degradation, both during construction and post-construction, a stormwater pollution control plan would be designed and implemented in accordance with the 2002 *Connecticut Guidelines for Erosion and Sedimentation Control*. The measures taken would prevent and minimize sedimentation, siltation, and/or pollution of the Naugatuck and Mad Rivers. Temporary and permanent stormwater management systems would be appropriately designed in conformance with the 2004 *Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual* to ensure that stormwater runoff is appropriately treated prior to discharge from the Proposed Action site. As a result, no adverse impacts to water resources and water quality are anticipated.

PENDING ANALYSIS

- During preliminary design, an evaluation of the effects of potential stormwater runoff from the increased impervious surface would be needed.
- Identification/agency concurrence on permits potentially needed; Construction General Permit for Stormwater and Dewatering Wastewaters

4.15 FLOODPLAINS

A preliminary review of CTDEEP GIS floodplain data developed from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mapping revealed that the Proposed Action alignment would be located partially within the floodway and 100-year floodplain of both the Naugatuck River and Mad River.

Although the paved multi-use trail, footbridges, kayak launch areas, and parking areas may be constructed within the boundaries of the 100-year floodplain and floodway, significant impacts to floodplains and downstream flood levels are not anticipated from this project.

PENDING ANALYSIS:

- During preliminary design, the extent to which the floodway and 100-year floodplains of both the Naugatuck and Mad Rivers would be affected should be determined.
- Coordination with CT DEEP would be needed. Although direct impacts are anticipated to be minimal, a CTDEEP Inland Water Resources permit application that includes Flood Management Certification (Connecticut General Statutes [CGS] Section 25-68b) may be required for the project since the Proposed Action is a state-funded action that has the potential to increase stormwater runoff to the Naugatuck River and Mad River due to new impervious surfaces. The Flood Management Certification process would involve a variety of analyses and design measures to ensure that the project would not cause potential flooding risks or hazards to people or property.

4.16 WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS, NAVIGABLE WATERWAYS, AND COASTAL RESOURCES

There are no federally-designated wild and scenic rivers, navigable waterways, or coastal resources located adjacent to or within the Proposed Action alignments; therefore, this project would not result in any impacts to these resources.

4.17 FARMLANDS

There are no active farms, prime farmland soils, or farmland soils of statewide significance located adjacent to or within the Proposed Action alignment. Therefore, this project will not result in any impacts to farmlands or potential future farmland resources.

4.18 COMMUNITY DISRUPTION

There are residential neighborhoods adjacent to the Proposed Action alignment. These are located southeast of the southern end of this Proposed Action segment, just east of South Main Street near Lounsbury Street and along Piedmont and Glen Streets. There are also residential neighborhoods on the west side of the Naugatuck River in the vicinity of the proposed new park along the riverfront at Jackson Street. The Freight Street Complete Streets Corridor would connect the new greenway to the heart of Waterbury's Downtown neighborhood.

The Proposed Action would enhance existing community cohesion. It would improve the existing visual and aesthetic character of the route through which it travels. It would provide new

convenient access to recreational open spaces along the Naugatuck River from these neighborhoods as well as to the Downtown. It would not degrade air quality, nor significantly change traffic conditions, or the existing noise environment. As such, the Proposed Action is expected to have a beneficial effect on community cohesion.

4.19 PUBLIC UTILITIES AND SERVICES

For the Feasibility Study, utilities throughout the study corridor were field reviewed. The review included utilities on bridges over the Naugatuck River including Freight Street, Bank Street, Washington Street, and Eagle Street. Connecticut Light & Power Company provides electricity in Waterbury, while several other carriers provide telecommunications. There are typical above- and below-ground utilities on every roadway. Utilities were also field investigated on those public and private properties within the corridor and away from roadways where the greenway could potentially be located. No unusual utility configurations were noted.

Surface utilities along the corridor generally consist of utility poles on both public and private properties. Utilities within private properties not adjacent to roadways, however, are minimal and would not likely require relocation for the greenway. The general design approach to construction of the greenway would be to avoid any utility relocation if possible, unless there is an advantage to shared-use of the corridor, such as a fiber optic line that could be co-located under the proposed trail. Any necessary utility relocation would be coordinated with the utility and affected property owner.

PENDING ANALYSIS

- Determination of specific point locations of utility interface with the greenway alignment as final engineering and greenway design move forward.

4.20 ENERGY REQUIREMENTS

Due to the nature of the elements that comprise the Proposed Action, energy demand is not anticipated as a significant issue. The greenway is expected to be a dawn-to-dusk facility with little or no addition of trail lighting or other energy consuming infrastructure. An increased energy demand would occur only during the construction of the Proposed Action due to the increased consumption of fossil fuels by construction equipment. Once the greenway is constructed and operational, there would be no significant associated energy demand.

4.21 SOCIOECONOMICS

Socioeconomic issues include negative changes to employment opportunities, impacts to major employers, and more general adverse effects on the economy of the City of Waterbury. The Proposed Action project would not alter access to jobs for any major employer. Similarly, it would not constrain any options for travel to work, or displace any employers. Consequently, it would not eliminate any employment opportunities. Conversely, the greenway project is anticipated to complement economic opportunity in the City by enhancing the human-scale environment where it

is located, open opportunities for related retail and services, add to multi-modal travel opportunities, and strengthen overall connectivity for travel by bicycle and walking. Overall, the effect is expected to be beneficial.

4.22 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 specifies that *no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.* Executive Order 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, issued in 1998, states that each federal agency *shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.*

In order to evaluate the Proposed Action Corridor for the purposes of environmental justice (EJ), U.S. Census Bureau (Census) data (2010) were reviewed to determine the presence and locations of minority and low-income populations. Collectively or independently, a concentration of these populations constitutes an area of concern for environmental justice. A summary of the findings is presented in the following table.

	Total Population	Percent Minority	Percent Below Poverty	% Limited English Proficiency
Study Area	13,587	38.5%	31%	14.6%
City of Waterbury	110,075	53%	20%	12%
MPO	286,398	27.4%	10.3%	6.9%
County	853,548	32.0%	11%	7.2%
State	3,558,172	28.2%	9.2%	7.6%

An impact to EJ populations can potentially occur where there is a concentration of low-income and/or minority and/or Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations and where impacts to them would be disproportionate to those on the general populous. The Census Tract as well as Block Group data indicates that the study area as a whole is comprised of environmental justice populations. This population represents just 12% of the City of Waterbury population overall. Outreach and communication with residents of the study area would be an important component of the implementation process for the Proposed Action.

4.23 ENVIRONMENTAL RISK SITES AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Information on the presence of hazardous materials or wastes within the project area was obtained through a hazardous sites database review. The review report and map was completed by Environmental Data Resources, Inc. (EDR) in September 2013. The hazardous material sites listed in the EDR report were compared to the 61 properties that have strip takings planned to determine if

those properties were listed in hazardous materials databases for the use, storage, generation or release of oil and hazardous materials (OHMs). According to the EDR report, 27 of the 61 properties that have planned strip takings were listed in hazardous material databases.

PENDING ANALYSIS

Additional investigations for the presence of OHMs would be required to determine the type and extent of hazardous material contamination at each of the affected properties. Further investigation, including site-specific, ASTM-compliant Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) would likely be required. If recognized environmental conditions are confirmed at these properties and a Phase II ESA is recommended, further investigation in the form of subsurface soil and groundwater investigations and laboratory testing may be required. The mitigation requirements will depend upon the extent and nature of the hazardous waste/materials found, the construction activity proposed and the intended uses of the site. Phase 1 ESAs were recommended at all of the 27 properties listed in hazardous material databases.

4.24 CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

Construction impacts could take the form of noise, erosion and sedimentation, and negative effects on air quality as the greenway is being constructed. For those sections along existing roadways, there may be some traffic related impacts.

The Feasibility Study included a discussion of green construction practices; committing to the use of environmentally sustainable construction materials and methods. The various permitting programs to which greenways are subject would limit potentially damaging construction methods. These permits would place strict controls on the areas of ground disturbance, discharge of sediment-laden stormwater, and potential for releases of harmful substances into the environment, etc. Other practices which are expected to be considered and/or employed include the following:

- Management and recycling of construction wastes
- More stringent erosion controls
- Control and management of on-site invasive species to minimize their spread during construction
- Limitations on work hours and light pollution
- Limitations on truck idling; requirements for construction vehicle exhaust emissions controls
- Restoration of disturbed surfaces with specific plant species
- Dust monitoring and mitigation
- Avoiding potentially contaminated soils within designated brownfield sites
- Use of permeable concrete where feasible
- Specifications that lumber portions of the trail be certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

PENDING ANALYSIS

- Construction period impact review once preliminary design is developed and specific locations for construction activity and staging are determined.

4.25 INDIRECT AND CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative effects are the impacts on the environment which result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. For this project, cumulative effects can be anticipated to be prompted by the potential greenway as part of a program of revitalization throughout the City of Waterbury. The Feasibility Study noted greenway construction as one form of infrastructure enhancement that can act as an incentive to private development or redevelopment. Consequently, under NEPA, the potential impacts of the greenway in association with enhancements such as the creation of a waterfront park and revitalization such as the cleanup of the Anamet site may be deemed to create a cumulative beneficial effect on the environment.

Indirect or secondary developments are those that are reasonably foreseeable such as future development elsewhere in the City or surrounding region that may be induced by the Proposed Action. Again, the presence of the greenway may serve as one catalyst to indirectly induce private investment in the City of Waterbury. Nonetheless, some redevelopment has already been occurring in Waterbury in the general project area independent and regardless of construction of the greenway or access to it. Therefore, the indirect effect of the greenway may be beneficial to ongoing redevelopment efforts in Waterbury, but not independently critical to its success.

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