



Transportation Mini-Series

September 24, 2026

Event Information:

Topics:

- » ConneCTed Conversations: Connecting Transportation Professionals Across New England
- » ConneCTing through Innovative Project Solutions
- » ConneCTing through the Industry
- » ConneCTing with our State and Municipal Partners
- » ConneCTing with our Community through Hands-On Demonstrations
- » ConneCTing with Regional Leadership: Shaping the Future of Transportation

Date & Time:

Thursday, September 24, 2026

8:00 am - 5:30 pm

Location:

Double Tree Hilton Hotel

42 Century Drive

Bristol, Connecticut 06010



Event Moderator:

Kristen Anderson Levesque

CTDOT, WTS CT Co-Chair Events Committee

Track 3 – ConneCTing with our State and Municipalities

Session II

Counting Bicyclists and Pedestrians:

The HOWs and WHYs

This session is envisioned as a short presentation about Texas' Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Exchange (<https://mobility.tamu.edu/bikepeddata/>) - the largest state nonmotorized count program and repository in the country, collecting counts since 2016 in over 1200 count locations in TX - as compared to bicycle and pedestrian counting occurring on CT trails through the CT Trail Census (https://cttrails.uconn.edu/ct_trail_census/). The discussion will tease out what each of these distinct programs (in distinctly different geographies and environments) can teach the other, and encourage the audience members to share their experience with best practices and new technologies to count active transportation users. Ultimately the count data is showing demand for bicycle and pedestrian (and other personal transportation modes) and helping guide fact-based decisions about infrastructure and policy. What is the state of the art in active transportation count technology and how are/should we be using the data?

Presenters:

- » Holly Parker, Texas A& M Transportation Institute
- » Rob Benz, PE, Texas A&M Transportation Institute
- » Aaron Budris, Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG)
- » Bruce Donald, Chair, CT Greenways Council
- » Dr. Phil Lasey, Texas A&M Transportation Institute



Holly Parker, Texas A& M Transportation Institute

Holly is an Active Transportation Planner and Transportation Demand Management Certified Professional (TDM-CP) at the Texas A&M Transportation Institute, where she works as a Research Scientist. Holly has over 28 years of professional experience in the sustainable transportation space, and is also a life-long cyclist, pedestrian and transit user.

Holly served Lane Transit District's Commuter Solutions Program while that agency built one of the nation's first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems in Eugene, OR, then crossed the country to initiate one of the first university sustainable transportation programs at Harvard. She then created and ran a similar program at Yale, became an active transportation consultant and worked for a bikeshare technology startup.



Rob Benz, PE, Texas A&M Transportation Institute

Rob has spent the past 35 years "playing in traffic." He received a B.S. and a M.S. degree in Civil Engineering from Texas A&M University and has held academic positions as an Adjunct Professor at Texas Southern University and at Prairie View A&M University. His professional interests include transportation data management and analysis, pavement marking, safety, planning, and bicycle and pedestrian activities. He is currently a research supervisor for the planning department of the Houston District of the Texas Department of Transportation. He leads the statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Exchange project to

measure and monitor non-motorized transportation in Texas. Recently, he led a Houston-Galveston Area Council study to determine the most efficient use of current technology to count bicycles and pedestrians based on local factors.



Aaron Budris, Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG)

Aaron Budris works closely with member municipalities, environmental nonprofits, and state and federal agencies to fix environmental harm done in the past, and to minimize future environmental impact. With a background in natural and cultural resource management, conservation, and planning, he advances projects that address the region's most pressing environmental challenges including watershed management, open space preservation, resiliency, and multiuse trail development, including coordination of municipal efforts to construct the Naugatuck River Greenway Trail.

Aaron co-founded the CT Trail Census program in 2016 as a pilot program administered by NVCOG with a grant from the CT DEEP Recreational Trails Program. Since then, the statewide program has grown considerably, and shifted to be administered by UConn, but Aaron continues to serve on the project management team and oversees the technical aspects of the trail user count program. Aaron has a B.A. in Anthropology and an M.S. in Geography from Central Connecticut State University.



Bruce Donald, Chair, CT Greenways Council

Bruce joined the East Coast Greenway Alliance in 2016 as the Tri-State Greenways Coordinator, serving CT, NY & NJ. In 2020, he became Southern New England Manager, leading greenway advocacy efforts in CT, RI and Central MA. Previously he served as president of the nonprofit Farmington Valley Trails Council for 14 years.

In 2014, Bruce was appointed Chairman of the Governor's Connecticut Greenways Council, which coordinates all state stakeholders in planning, implementing, and funding the greenway system through the Connecticut Recreational Trails Grants Program for the Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection. That program has distributed over \$41 million to 179 projects to date. His strong advocacy to the CT Legislature has secured \$10M/yr through 2028 for this valuable program. His current portfolio of funded ECG projects totals \$201 million. Bruce currently is a Director of both Bike/Walk CT and the CT Outdoor Recreation Alliance and serves as President of the Air Line State Park Trail Alliance, and as advisor to many other boards of directors and technical advisor to a variety of design studies.



Dr. Phil Lasley, Texas A&M Transportation Institute

Phil leads data analysis, tool, and web app development efforts for a variety of Texas A&M Transportation Institute's sponsors. Phil has actively worked with federal, state, and local transportation agencies to create simple and easily-understood solutions and visualizations that foster data-based and inclusive decision making to get the biggest bang from our transportation bucks.

He also managed and coordinated congestion- and mobility-related projects within TTI's Policy Research Center (PRC), providing policy research, information, and educational materials to the Texas State Legislature. Dr. Lasley also serves as an adjunct lecturer on the graduate faculty in the Department of Multidisciplinary Engineering and in the Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning at Texas A&M University.

Phil has developed extensive expertise in several areas, including non-motorized mobility; mobility analysis and congestion theory, measurement, and mitigation; data visualization; destination access and location choice theory; and freight mobility. His work in the bicycle and pedestrian areas led him to non-motorized data quality management and developing several quality assurance/quality control techniques that can be used with major data collection efforts. Currently, Phil manages the Texas Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Exchange, the largest state nonmotorized count repository in the nation.

Track 3 – ConneCTing with our State and Municipalities

Session III

Advancing Inclusive Customer Experience in Transit

Advancing Inclusive Customer Experience in Transit explores why understanding customer needs, abilities, and lived experiences is fundamental to planning and delivering successful transit systems. The presentation illustrates the wide range of needs riders bring to a transit system, and how those needs can change across contexts and over time. It then introduces the concepts of accessibility, universal design, and inclusive design, and how they can be applied to advance the customer experience. The presentation delves into journey mapping as a hands-on method for systematically tracing the rider's experience from trip planning through arrival, identifying where barriers emerge, where the system can present challenges for different riders, and examples of where targeted improvements can make the greatest difference. Throughout, the session reinforces that customer experience is a shared responsibility, requiring empathy, coordination, and collaboration across disciplines and project phases.

Presenters:

- » Emily Gallo, AICP, ENV SP, HNTB, Moderator
- » Alicia Leite, HNTB
- » Katherine Hedberg-Klose, CTDOT, WTS President



Emily Gallo, AICP, ENV SP, HNTB

Emily Gallo, AICP, ENV SP, is a recognized leader in inclusive infrastructure and mobility, with two decades of experience in the transportation industry. As Vice President, Director of Infrastructure and Mobility Equity at HNTB, she assists agencies, policy makers, and HNTB teams in addressing challenges and opportunities in inclusive infrastructure. Emily previously worked as Chief of Staff at NYC DOT and the NYC

Taxi and Limousine Commission, and as a policy analyst in the NYC Mayor's Office.

Emily is committed to giving back to the transportation industry through leadership in professional organizations. She serves as Chair for Mission Advancement for Urban Land Institute (ULI) New York, and on the boards of the NYU Rudin Center for Transportation, the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, and is an appointed member of the Urban Design Forum's Local Circle. She previously co-chaired ULI NY's Infrastructure Council and was on the Board of Directors for WTS Greater New York Chapter.

Her contributions have earned her recognition as one of *City & State New York's Responsible 100* in 2024 and the *2023 WTS Greater New York Member of the Year* award. She graduated cum laude from Yale University and received a Masters Degree in City and Regional Planning from the University of Pennsylvania Weitzman School of Design.



Alicia Leite, HNTB

Alicia Leite is a Project Manager with HNTB Corporation in Rocky Hill, Connecticut, specializing in transit planning, customer experience, and strategic transportation initiatives. In this role, she supports public transportation agencies in delivering innovative, customer-focused solutions that enhance mobility and service delivery.

Prior to joining HNTB, Alicia served as an Assistant Vice President at WSP USA, where she was a member of the Advisory Services Organizational Transformation team. She led strategic initiatives for clients across the country, helping organizations navigate complex transformations through planning, change management, and operational improvement strategies. Before transitioning to consulting, Alicia spent more than a decade with the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), where she held several leadership positions within the Bureau of Public Transportation. As Transit Manager, she oversaw statewide transit planning, marketing, and customer experience programs for both bus and rail services. Previously, she served as Supervising Transportation Planner for the department's Customer Experience unit, leading initiatives focused on improving the rider experience across Connecticut's public transportation network.

During her tenure at CTDOT, Alicia also served as Assistant to the Bureau Chief of Public Transportation and spent nearly two years in the Commissioner's Office as the Department's Legislative Liaison, coordinating transportation policy and legislative affairs. Earlier in her career, she worked as a Transportation Planner and played a key role in the implementation of two transformative transit projects: CTfastrak, Connecticut's first bus rapid transit system, and the CTrail Hartford Line passenger rail service.

Alicia is an active leader within the transportation industry. She is a graduate of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Emerging Leaders Program (Class of 2018), serves as an APTA Emerging Leaders Program National Mentor, and was recently appointed to a two-year term on the APTA Emerging Leaders Program Committee. She also mentors emerging professionals through the WTS Connecticut Chapter Mentoring Program and serves as a guest speaker for the COMTO Connecticut Chapter Mentoring Program.



Katherine Hedberg-Klose, CTDOT, WTS President

Katie Hedberg-Klose is the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinating Engineer at the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), where she leads efforts to ensure ADA compliance in the public right-of-way and across CTDOT transportation facilities. She provides technical guidance and coordinates closely with other Connecticut agencies, municipalities, and the public to advance transportation access and mobility. At CTDOT, Katie serves on the Complete Streets Committee and Highway Standards Committee. She also serves on the state's Vision Zero Council as sub-committee co-chair and is a board member of the ADA Coalition of Connecticut.

Katie holds a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering with a minor in Architectural Engineering from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI). Before joining CTDOT, she worked in the private sector with a focus on traffic engineering and transportation planning. A dedicated leader in the transportation community, Katie currently serves as President of the WTS Connecticut Chapter and is a Past Chair of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Committee on Younger Members. Outside of work, Katie enjoys traveling and spending time outdoors with her husband and their three golden retrievers.

Track 3 – ConneCTing with our State and Municipalities

Session IV

Building Public Trust: *Community Engagement for Successful Infrastructure Projects*

This session will include a short presentation on the importance of community engagement with an infrastructure project, followed by a panel of municipal leaders sharing their successes and setbacks in community outreach.

Misinformation and lack of understanding can derail infrastructure projects. Clearly communicating the benefits of a project, explaining how to use new infrastructure, and answering stakeholder questions can improve buy-in and combat the circulation of inaccurate information. Presenters will share real-life experiences of community engagement, including times when things did not go well and when they did. Participants will learn why this step is important and the best practices for outreach.

Presenters:

- » Amy Watkins, Watch For Me, Moderator
- » Emma Petersen, Town of Manchester
- » Jim Travers, City of Norwalk
- » Mark Moriarty, City of New Britain
- » Rich Donovan, Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG)



Amy Watkins, MPH, Watch For Me, Moderator

Amy Watkins, MPH is the program manager for Watch for Me CT, a pedestrian and bicyclist safety campaign funded by the Connecticut Department of Transportation in partnership with Connecticut Children's Injury Prevention Center. Amy earned her Masters of Public Health at the University of Connecticut and has worked for 25 years in community health education.



Emma Petersen, Town of Manchester

Emma Petersen is the Principal Comprehensive Planner for the Town of Manchester, Connecticut, where she leads long-range planning initiatives, plan development, community engagement, and data analysis that help shape the town's future growth and development. She holds a Masters in Urban & Regional Planning from the University of Florida, where she was a recipient of the WTS Connecticut Maggie Walsh Leadership Legacy Scholarship, as well as a certificate in Geospatial Information Analysis. Her work brings together planning, data, and community perspectives to translate complex issues into practical strategies for the community.



Jim Travers, City of Norwalk

Jim Travers is the Director of Transportation, Mobility, and Parking for the City of Norwalk. Jim provides a wealth of knowledge to the traffic and transportation planning for one of the State's fastest growing municipalities. Prior to his tenure in Norwalk, he served as the Bureau Chief of Transportation, Traffic, and Parking for the City of Stamford, and before that he was the Executive Director of Transportation, Traffic, and Parking for the City of New Haven.

He is a CT-ITE Transportation Leadership Award recipient, and he is most proud to have led efforts for the adoption of Complete Streets Legislation and Design Manuals in all three of the municipalities he has served. Additionally, he also led the adoption of Stamford's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, as well as Norwalk's Transportation Master Plan. These guide documents help to improve the roadway for the most vulnerable users.

In addition to Jim's tenure in Transportation, he also has 20 years of progressively responsible experience in organizational development within corporate structures, and non-profit organizations. His background in business and public administration is well-suited to the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead as Norwalk's urban revitalization focuses on innovation, housing, and jobs, all while connecting people to their community.



Mark Moriarty, City of New Britain

For more than 20 years, Mark Moriarty has served as the Director of Public Works for the City of New Britain, overseeing a broad range of municipal services, including streets and parks, water, sewer and stormwater utilities, solid waste management, traffic operations, fleet services, and capital projects. Through this work, he has developed extensive

expertise in public infrastructure, transportation, and municipal operations, with a particular focus on Complete Streets and traffic safety in urban environments.

Under Mark's leadership, New Britain's investment in Complete Streets infrastructure is approaching \$100 million. These investments have transformed neighborhoods throughout the City, improving mobility, safety, accessibility, and overall quality of life. In conjunction with its Complete Streets initiatives, New Britain has developed a bicycle network of more than 50 miles, as well as a growing network of dedicated multi-use trails connecting residents to neighborhoods, parks, schools, and other destinations throughout the City.

In recent years, New Britain has placed an even greater emphasis on traffic safety and protecting vulnerable road users. Through the City's Vision Zero initiative, which focuses on eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries, New Britain has achieved a 47 percent reduction in serious injury and fatal crashes over the past five years. These efforts reflect Mark's commitment to creating safer, more accessible, and more sustainable transportation systems for residents of all ages and abilities. Beyond his work with the City of New Britain, Mark serves in several statewide and regional leadership and advisory roles. He is a member of CTDOT's Connecticut Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, the Watch for Me CT Board, the BRRFOC Executive Board, and the Sustainable CT Municipal Certification Board. Through these roles, he contributes his experience and perspective to efforts

focused on transportation safety, active transportation, sustainability, and the future of public infrastructure throughout Connecticut.

While Mark has served New Britain for more than two decades, his commitment to improving the City has not diminished. His continued involvement in local, regional, and statewide initiatives demonstrates a longstanding dedication to innovation, public service, and shaping the future of urban infrastructure. His leadership and commitment to making New Britain a safer, more connected, and more livable community are helping position the City for a bright future.



**Rich Donovan, Naugatuck Valley Council of Government,
NVCOG**

Rich Donovan is the Deputy Executive Director and Integrated Mobility and Community Planning Director for the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments. In these roles, Rich leads a team of planners working with the nineteen member municipalities on issues related transportation, land use, and the important connection between these two planning areas.

Over the past five years with the NVCOG, Rich has worked hard to identify regional transportation priorities, coordinate investments, and advance the principals of vision zero in the region. Originally from Connecticut, Rich and his wife Allie spent many years in the DC area before moving to New Haven with their dogs Vino and Moka.

Track 3 – ConneCTing with our State and Municipalities

Session V

Strengthening Collaboration Through a Transportation Planning Charrette

In a world where change is relentless, the leaders who thrive aren't necessarily those with all the answers, but those who have trained themselves to respond with agility. This session focuses on mastering six Change Reflexes that transform exhausting, manual reactions to uncertainty into automatic, resilient adaptability. Participants will begin by exploring the fundamental shift from manual effort to automatic adaptability, learning how this transition provides a sustainable foundation for long-term resilience. By discovering their natural change style, attendees will gain insight into how their innate tendencies build strength, while also identifying the specific friction points that emerge when they are under pressure. The session further dives into a comprehensive set of reflexes organized across three critical response zones, internal, directional, and external, demonstrating how each one supports stability during upheaval. Finally, the workshop concludes with a practical commitment: participants will choose one recurring daily moment to practice one or more of these reflexes, ensuring they become a repeatable habit.

Presenters:

- » Joann Fryer, Fuss & O'Neill
- » Jennifer Babowicz, Fuss & O'Neill
- » Matt Skelly, Fuss & O'Neill
- » Stephanie White, Fuss & O'Neill
- » Sylwia Tanski, Fuss & O'Neill



JoAnn Fryer, Fuss & O'Neill

JoAnn has been a leader in the transportation industry for more than 30 years, beginning her career in 1991 after earning a B.S. in Civil Engineering from the University of New Hampshire.

Since joining Fuss & O'Neill through its acquisition of CLD Consulting Engineers in 2017, she has advanced to Senior Vice President and Transportation Market Leader, where she oversees client relationships, strategic growth, and transportation initiatives across New England.

As a respected industry leader, JoAnn was the founding President of WTS New Hampshire, was named the 2025 WTS-NH Woman of the Year and the 2026 New Hampshire Engineer of the Year and remains actively involved in organizations including ACEC-NH, WTS, NH Society of Professional Engineers, and APWA.

She also co-chairs the NHDOT/ACEC-NH Consultant Quality Initiative Committee and champions inclusion and belonging through Fuss & O'Neill's IDEA program, reflecting her longstanding commitment to advancing the engineering profession, fostering collaboration, and creating a more equitable industry.

Jennifer Babowicz, Fuss & O'Neill



Jennifer is an experienced engineer specializing in traffic engineering, transportation planning, and roadway design. Her technical expertise includes traffic signal and signal system design, maintenance and protection of traffic, traffic impact studies, transportation planning and analysis, and complete streets initiatives. She possesses extensive knowledge of Connecticut Department of Transportation processes and procedures, including the production of digital contract plans, technical specifications, and supplemental contract documents. Throughout her career, Jennifer has collaborated closely with state agencies, municipalities, and private-sector clients to successfully deliver a wide range of transportation and planning projects.

Matt Skelly, Fuss & O'Neill



Matthew has a wide range of experience in traffic impact analysis, feasibility and planning studies, transit planning studies, traffic calming, traffic signal design, and roadway design. His expertise includes transportation planning, traffic assessment studies and traffic signal design. Matthew is familiar with Massachusetts and Connecticut Department of Transportation procedures and permitting processes, as well as roadway and traffic signal construction practices. Computer application experience includes SYNCHRO, HCM, AutoCAD, MicroStation, and Arcview GIS.

Stephanie White, Fuss & O'Neill



Stephanie has more than 20 years of experience and has been involved in all facets of the planning, design, and implementation process. Her expertise includes downtown urban revitalization, placemaking, urban design, ecological-based planting designs, park master planning, housing, education facilities, and new urbanism techniques. Stephanie has been a team member on multiple award-winning design projects recognized by the American Society of Landscape Architects. With a keen sense of design and attention to detail, she seeks to deliver creative and sustainable solutions to every design challenge.

Sylwia Tanski, Fuss & O'Neill



Sylwia helps develop and implement context-sensitive designs that incorporate safe passage for all users while considering long-term functionality and user experience. Sylwia is particularly passionate about working in urban settings, focusing on walkable street designs that provide amenities within a short distance and accommodate various modes of transportation, including walking, biking, and public transit.

Over the years, Sylwia has been involved in numerous roadway, streetscape, and safety improvement projects throughout Connecticut, and she continues to expand her skillset.

Track 3 – ConneCTing with our State and Municipalities

Session VI

CTDOT Statewide Active Transportation Plan

CTDOT is finalizing its updated Statewide Active Transportation Plan (ATP), a roadmap for improving safety, accessibility, and connectivity across Connecticut through a Complete Streets and Safe System approach to active transportation infrastructure on state roadways. While the ATP focuses on state-owned facilities and regionally significant bicycle and pedestrian connections, CTDOT recognizes that a successful statewide active transportation network depends on strong local bicycle and pedestrian networks that connect communities to regional and statewide destinations.

This presentation will highlight how CTDOT collaborated with municipalities, Councils of Governments (COGs), and other regional stakeholders throughout the planning process to identify needs, refine recommendations, and better understand local challenges and opportunities. In Spring 2025, CTDOT and HDR conducted day-long tours across Connecticut's eight COG regions, giving municipal representatives the opportunity to share firsthand concerns related to safety, connectivity gaps, maintenance responsibilities, funding challenges, and implementation barriers along state and local corridors.

Throughout these tours and broader public and stakeholder engagement efforts, a consistent message emerged: municipalities need greater transparency, stronger coordination, and additional technical and financial support to advance local active transportation projects. In response, the ATP includes recommendations for guidance documents, prioritization tools, coordination strategies, and implementation resources intended to strengthen collaboration between CTDOT, regional agencies, and local governments while, helping transform statewide goals into implementable local and regional projects.

Presenters:

- » Emily Barnoski, PE, HDR
- » Anna Bergeron, CTDOT
- » Paul Ashworth, CTDOT
- » Christopher Roberts, CTDOT



Emily Barnoski, PE, HDR

Emily is a transportation engineer with 14 years of experience leading multimodal planning and traffic engineering projects across the United States. She is dedicated to advancing safety and mobility through innovative planning and context-sensitive design.

Over the past two years, Emily has served as Project Manager for the Connecticut Department of Transportation's Statewide Active Transportation Plan, leading the development of a comprehensive statewide framework that embeds Complete Streets and Safe System principles into the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of active transportation facilities on state roadways.

Through this work, she is helping shape a more connected multimodal transportation network that supports walking, biking, and rolling for people of all ages and abilities.



Anna Bergeron, CTDOT

Anna is the Supervisor of the Active Transportation Unit at the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT). With more than 20 years of service at CTDOT, she has extensive experience advancing multimodal transportation projects across the state.

In her current role, Anna leads the Active Transportation Unit, overseeing initiatives that improve walking and bicycling accommodations and promote safe, accessible, and connected transportation networks. She works to ensure that multimodal infrastructure and Complete Streets principles are considered in the planning and design of state transportation projects throughout Connecticut.



Paul Ashworth, CTDOT

Paul is a transportation planning professional with the majority of his experience working with municipalities and communities to find transportation and land use solutions that best serve the public while ensuring local economic prosperity.

Currently serving as ConnDOT's Bicycle & Pedestrian coordinator, Paul started the ConnDOT employee bike club and is a firm believer that experience outside of a vehicle can change lives.



Christopher Roberts, CTDOT

Chris is a Transportation Planner with the Connecticut Department of Transportation , where he works on active transportation planning initiatives that support safe, efficient, and sustainable mobility throughout the state.

He studied Urban Planning at Central Connecticut State University and has a background in land use, municipal, and regional planning.