ACHIEVING THE BALANCE

Capitol Region Council of Governments
Annual Report 2003
The Capitol Region Council of Governments’
YEAR AT A GLANCE
2002 - 2003

♦ CRCOG completed the update of the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development, the most comprehensive update in ten years. *Achieving the Balance: A Plan of Conservation and Development for the Capitol Region* is intended to guide decisions on physical development with an eye toward both the physical and social impacts of these decisions. The plan provides an overview of the issues that influence our regional development patterns, and presents goals and policies to guide our future conservation and development.

♦ CRCOG continues to work hard to implement the Regional Transit Strategy. Progress has been made on many of the strategy’s components, including the New Britain Busway, New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Rail, Hartford East Busway, Griffin Busway and the Downtown Circulator.

Earlier this year, our Station Area Planning project for the New Britain Busway began. The project involves working with municipal and community leaders in Hartford, New Britain, Newington, and West Hartford to encourage transit oriented development along the busway corridor. CRCOG also completed a travel forecast analysis for the New Britain Busway which documents the strong competitive standing of the busway compared to other projects around the country.

♦ Last November an important milestone was reached when the CRCOG Policy Board adopted the Municipal Fiscal Disparities Implementation Plan that addresses economic and social disparities in Hartford and the region. We will keep working with Connecticut’s Office of Policy and Management to help follow through on the implementation of key aspects of this plan.

♦ The City of Hartford shared a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services with CRCOG to develop a Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS). Our Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee is helping in the development of a regionally coordinated medical response along with other initiatives should a major catastrophe occur.

♦ CRCOG contributed significantly to the I-84 and the I-91 Transportation Investment Area (TIA) Corridor Plans. CRCOG also worked on financing transportation, especially transit, and on freight movement and highway incident management for the State Transportation Strategy Board (TSB). The New Britain Busway, the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Rail, and Jobs Access were all listed among the top priorities in our TIAs. These plans were submitted to the TSB last fall and the TSB then submitted its action plan to the Governor and General Assembly in January of 2003.

♦ Since its creation in 1995, CRCOG has been a member of the Capitol Region Partnership. This alliance of eleven regional organizations staged the 2000 Census event last fall, which provided data and the tools for organizations and individuals throughout the Capitol region to work together to build upon our strengths and address our challenges.

This event spurred CRCOG’s production of *Trends Shaping Our Region, A Census Data Profile of Connecticut’s Capitol Region*, which identifies some of the major social and economic trends affecting the MetroHartford region.
FROM THE BOARD CHAIRMAN & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Achieving the Balance

CRCOG spent considerable time this year analyzing economic and social trends over the past decade and earlier and looking into the future to predict what it will take to keep the region economically competitive and a great place to live and work.

Our recently adopted Regional Plan of Conservation and Development, called *Achieving the Balance*, provides a blue print for maintaining a regional fabric in which strong urban, suburban, and rural communities can thrive. It also addresses the need for building better socioeconomic balance in our communities so the entire region can thrive.

The Regional Plan draws on two other CRCOG efforts that analyze long-term trends affecting MetroHartford. The first is called *Trends Shaping our Region – A Census Data Profile of the Capitol Region*. And the second is our Municipal Fiscal Disparities Implementation Plan submitted to the Governor and legislative leaders in compliance with a law passed two years ago.

There are numerous good and dedicated people and organizations working on the many facets required to keep a region healthy and attractive. And, we are coordinating our efforts more and more effectively. In that spirit, based on our analysis over the past year, we believe that CRCOG can contribute most to keeping the region on top by focusing on the following five priorities in the coming months:

1. Carry out recommendations in CRCOG’s implementation plan addressing municipal fiscal disparities in Hartford and the Region, especially those focusing on housing and education.


3. Support initiatives aimed at strengthening our region’s future workforce, including Mayor Perez’s Task Force and the work of the Capital Region Workforce Development Board.

4. Work for property tax relief and initiatives to build more livable, more balanced communities with our partners in the Capitol Region Partnership and at the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities, the Connecticut Regional Institute for the 21st Century, the CenterEdge Coalition, and others.

5. Support others who are working to build a strong region. These include many organizations and people working on a range of initiatives aimed at strengthening families, neighborhoods, businesses, schools, non-profits, civic participation, housing, arts and culture and many other facets of the region’s life.

To the extent that CRCOG has been successful in the past, it is because of the tremendous support given by our regional and local partners and by many others who recognize the need for regional solutions to regional challenges. We are grateful to all of our partners, and we are convinced that if we continue to work together effectively, we will build on our region’s strengths and face our challenges to maintain MetroHartford as a great region – with a strong economy and a quality of life that is the envy of other regions across the country.

From left, Chairman Stephen T. Cassano and Executive Director Richard J. Porth
Achieving the Balance: A Plan of Conservation and Development for the Capitol Region

Achieving the Balance: A Plan of Conservation and Development for the Capitol Region was adopted by the Capitol Region Council of Governments Policy Board in May of 2003 after two years of extensive discussion, deliberation and debate.

This plan is a general guide for the conservation and development of Connecticut's Capitol Region. While many factors influence how we grow as a region, the plan recommends a regional development pattern guided by six major themes:

- Focus new regional development in areas in which existing and planned infrastructure can support that development.
- Support efforts to strengthen and revitalize Hartford, the Capitol Region’s central city, and also support the revitalization of older, urbanized areas throughout the region.
- Develop in a manner that respects and preserves community character and key natural resources.
- Implement open space and natural resource protection plans that acknowledge and support the multi-town nature of our natural systems.
- Support the creation of new employment and housing opportunities, and transportation choices, to meet the diverse needs of our region’s citizens.
- Encourage regional cooperation in the protection of natural resources, the revitalization of urban areas, and economic development.

The regional plan provides a blueprint for maintaining strong urban, suburban and rural communities as part of a strong regional fabric, and for building better socioeconomic balance in our communities. It enables us to maintain and create choices for current and future residents—choices in how we live, work and travel throughout the region.

The Capitol Region Plan of Conservation and Development is made up of two parts:

- A narrative plan that presents an overview of issues that influence our regional development pattern, and presents goals and policies to guide our future development.
- Three policy guide maps that present the narrative goals and policies in visual form. They are the:
  - Plan of Conservation and Development Land Use Policy Map;
  - Conservation Focus Areas Map; and
  - Economic Development Areas of Regional Significance Map.

CRCOG will use these policy maps along with the narrative goals and policies to support plans, development proposals and conservation/preservation activities consistent with the plan’s objectives. It is hoped our member municipalities and all parts of the Greater Hartford community will also support it and work toward its implementation.
The CRCOG Livable Communities Project played a notable role in the creation of the Regional Plan. This project gave us the opportunity to talk directly to over 2,000 people throughout the region. Based on responses to visual preference surveys, discussions with the public, and a telephone survey conducted by the UConn Center for Survey Research and Analysis, we identified four themes in citizens’ responses.

What we found is that a majority of people in our region want similar things, regardless of whether they live in Hartford, the suburbs, or rural communities. These things include:

- Growth carried out in a manner that preserves community character and quality of life.
- A strong center and central city.
- Moderate- and low-income housing in all communities.
- Better and more balanced transportation options.

The Regional Plan includes recommendations that address all of these issues.

The plan also draws on the recent CRCOG report, *Trends Shaping Our Region: A Census Data Profile of Connecticut’s Capitol Region*. This report presents our regional strengths, and demographic trends that strengthen or threaten our economic vitality and quality of life. Through this and other analyses, the plan identifies the challenges facing our region and sets goals to address them. The plan’s implementation guide, to be completed in FY 2004, will define action steps necessary to help us achieve our goals.

We believe that by following the blueprint laid out in this plan, we can achieve the balance between conservation and development that will keep our region strong. The fruits of achieving this balance include:

- Thriving urban, suburban and rural communities.
- The conservation and preservation of natural areas that provide form and contrast to the man-made features of the region.
- A wide range of housing choices that serves citizens of all ages, incomes, races and ethnic groups.
- Varied transportation options that allow people to move freely throughout the region by private automobiles, buses, trains, bicycles or walking.
- A growing economy that provides goods and services to our region, the nation and the world, and offers good job opportunities to the region’s residents.

Together—we can grow better.
Regional Transit Strategy Update

Progress continues to be made on the implementation of the Regional Transit Strategy. The strategy includes several transitways for the exclusive use of buses throughout the region, as well as a commuter rail service linking New Haven, Hartford and Springfield with a new connection to Bradley Airport.

♦ New Britain Busway - A great deal of work has been done on this busway during the past year. In January 2003, the Station Area Planning Project for the New Britain Busway began. Additionally, CRCOG’s ridership and user benefit analysis for this busway yielded promising results. Read more about progress below and on the following page.

♦ New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Rail Commuter Rail - ConnDOT is conducting a study to develop an implementation plan for commuter rail service on the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Line. The study will identify capital and operating costs, and potential ridership levels. This study is being prepared in coordination with a study advisory committee and is expected to be completed in early 2004.

♦ Hartford East Busway - ConnDOT is conducting an assessment of bus rapid transit in the corridor east of Hartford (Hartford-Manchester/Vernon). The final report, with the selection of a locally preferred alternative, is expected to be completed in early 2004.

♦ Griffin Corridor Busway - Throughout the past year CRCOG has been working on this study, which will be completed by the end of 2003 and will spell out the most effective ways to improve transit in the corridor. Broad public input for this project has been sought and the project team has held more than 45 meetings with interested groups.

♦ Downtown Circulator Project - The Greater Hartford Transit District and the City of Hartford completed a feasibility study for the implementation of a Downtown Circulation System operating in Hartford. Efforts to find funding to implement and operate the System continue. The implementation target date is Fall of 2004.

CRCOG will continue to work closely with the Transit District, the City and the MetroHartford Alliance to try to find revenues to provide quality, reliable downtown circulator service.

New Britain Busway Ridership Forecast Yields Promising Results

CRCOG staff used the regional travel forecast model to prepare a full ridership and user benefit analysis of the New Britain Busway project. The analysis was required as part of the application to the Federal Transit Administration for $80,000,000 in federal New Starts funding. The travel forecast and user benefit analysis is a key element in the Connecticut Department of Transportation’s application for federal funding.

The outcome of this analysis revealed that the New Britain Bus Rapid Transit project is a very cost effective solution to transportation problems in the region’s most congested corridor. It also indicated that the project competes favorably with other New Start projects from around the country. We believe that this will help in the effort to get a full funding grant agreement from the FTA.

For a full discussion of this topic see the New Britain Busway report on our website at www.crcog.org
New Britain Busway Station Area Planning Project

CRCOG is working with the cities of Hartford and New Britain and the towns of West Hartford and Newington to encourage transit-oriented development (TOD) along the New Britain/Hartford Busway. Committees in each municipality are creating master plans for the ½ mile area around each of the 12 stations. Over the next few months, full station area plans will be created for six station areas. Full planning includes recommendations for walk/bike/motor vehicle routes to the station; assessment of market conditions and the physical and regulatory environment; proposals for new regulations, development, and station area site plans; and incentives for development and marketing of sites targeted for transit-oriented development.

Please see our website (www.ctbusway.com/Station Area Planning) for details on meetings, committees, and materials. The Station Area Planning project will be completed by December 2003.

TEA-21 Reauthorization

Nearly 200 business, civic and government leaders from throughout New England representing all six states attended a Transportation Summit, which CRCOG helped to organize. Held in Massachusetts last April, the conference focused on the Reauthorization of TEA-21 and the attendees commitment to work together to advocate for provisions in the bill that reflect the transportation needs of New England.

In the photo to the left, U.S. Senator Edward Kennedy and CRCOG Policy Board Chairman Stephen Cassano at the New England TEA-21 Reauthorization Summit.

Transportation Investment Areas

The I-84 and I-91 Transportation Investment Areas (TIAs) submitted their final plans to the State Transportation Strategy Board in the fall of 2002, as required by state legislation. These plans were the result of significant deliberation on the part of committee members in identifying transportation issues, and developing project and policy initiatives to address those issues. The TIA board members continued to meet throughout the year to insure that a regional voice was heard by the statewide TSB members as they consolidated the plans from all five TIAs.

The TSB submitted its Action Plan to the Governor and the Connecticut General Assembly in January 2003. In addition, the TSB established working groups and subcommittees to address specific policy issues.

CRCOG Policy Board Chairman Stephen Cassano was asked to chair the Incident Management Task Force. CRCOG staff have been able to contribute substantially to the work of the Task Force based on CRCOG’s work with the Greater Hartford Incident Management Steering Committee. A report is due later in 2003.

5 Years of Jobs Access Service

Now in its fifth year of providing transportation service to assist former welfare recipients and low-income clients in getting to work, CRCOG’s Jobs Access program continues to be a priority for many of the region’s social service agencies and employers. With an average daily ridership of almost 3,000, the Jobs Access program continues to receive requests for new service. CRCOG and its Jobs Access partners remain committed to working to obtain new and/or long-term funding to maintain a program that is essential to many of the region’s residents and businesses.
CAPTAIN Mobile Data Communication System

Now in its fifth year of operation, the inaugural project of the Public Safety Council, the CAPTAIN Mobile Data Communication system continues to develop and expand. It is now home to almost 1,200 laptop computers in more than eighty police organizations, which link them to local, state and national criminal information files. Technical committee representatives are working with the State’s Department of Information Technology to move portions of its operation to their site.

CREPC
The Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee (CREPC), made up of thirty-seven municipalities, will celebrate its second birthday this summer. CREPC serves two purposes, the first is to act as a consolidated local emergency planning committee (LEPC) and the second is for emergency planning purposes. There are fourteen CREPC subcommittees modeled after the emergency support functions in the Federal Response Plan. The group has produced a Regional Emergency Disaster (RED) plan, the second edition of which will be unveiled at its September 2003 meeting.

In 2003, the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) retained a consultant to conduct the State’s first regional hazard analysis of the newly organized Capitol Region LEPC.

Metropolitan Medical Response System

The Public Safety Council, through the City of Hartford, successfully applied for a federal Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) grant. A pharmaceutical stockpile for Capitol Region first responders is in place. The MMRS committee has authored self-inoculation kit protocols for emergency personnel and a decontamination protocol. Work has now begun on a protocol for the forward movement of patients during a crisis.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Grants

CRCOG received two separate grants from FEMA this year. The first grant is to conduct the review and enhancement of the municipal emergency operations plans (EOP’s) for all CRCOG municipalities.

The purpose of the second grant is to establish a Citizen Corps Regional Council and develop Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT’s). CERT teams will work with citizens in emergency preparedness and response and provide team members training in lifesaving skills.

Other Public Safety Projects

- The Comprehensive Planning Committee named Priority Dispatch Corporation as the bid winner to provide Emergency Medical Dispatch training and procedures to public safety telecommunicators in the CRCOG region.

- Physical Ability testing programs administered by CRCOG, through Complete Health and Injury Prevention, Inc. and the State of Connecticut’s Commission on Fire Prevention and Control, continue to physically assess police and fire recruits for Capitol Region departments based on state and national standards.

- Work continues on a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) consolidation project involving Avon, Burlington, Farmington, and Simsbury.
OUR 2003 ANNUAL MEETING

In June of 2003, the Capitol Region Council of Governments held its Annual Meeting at the Manchester Country Club. The event gives CRCOG the opportunity to celebrate accomplishments in the region during the past year and also look toward the year ahead. The evening’s agenda included an annual progress report, inter-town cooperation and regional leadership awards, and door prizes. Ken Kahn, Executive Director of the Greater Hartford Arts Council, was the keynote speaker.

From left, Rocky Hill’s Director of Highways and Engineering Jim Sollmi, Wethersfield’s Town Engineer Michael Turner and Mayor Kitch Breen Czernicki, and Newington’s Public Works Director Michael Mancini and Mayor Tommy McBride accept an Inter-town Cooperation Award for their leadership in the Capitol Region Municipal Engineers Association.

CRCOG Chairman Stephen Cassano

Keynote Speaker, Ken Kahn, Executive Director of the Greater Hartford Arts Council

CRCOG Annual Meeting 2003 - Inter-town Cooperation Awards

Newington, Rocky Hill and Wethersfield
Due in large part to the lead role town engineers and directors took in the Capitol Region Municipal Engineers Association, our towns worked effectively together and with Connecticut’s Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on storm water issues. The Capitol Region Municipal Engineers Association’s work on this issue was nationally recognized by the American Public Works Association (APWA).

Hartford
Hartford is being recognized for providing leadership in strengthening the emergency preparedness of our region. By sharing the Capitol Region Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) grant with CRCOG, we are able to work together to develop a regionally coordinated medical response should a major catastrophe occur.

Hartford and West Hartford
Hartford and West Hartford’s collaboration to enforce safe driving laws in both municipalities is a great example of inter-town cooperation. This partnership has made a real contribution to quality of life in neighborhoods in these communities.

Tolland
Tolland is recognized for providing leadership in the update of the Capitol Region Plan of Conservation and Development. The Chair of Tolland’s Planning and Zoning Commission played a key role in the completion of this important Plan, which provides goals and policies to guide our region’s future conservation and development.

Regional Leadership Awards

Riverfront Recapture
Riverfront Recapture’s commitment over many years to providing access to the Connecticut River represents one of the most vital success stories in our region. Its work is widely regarded as a major catalyst for the development of the riverfront, most notably for Constitution Plaza and Adriaen’s Landing.

Metropolitan District Commission
The Metropolitan District Commission has long served as a model of inter-town cooperation in Connecticut, providing quality services on a multi-town basis. Recently, the MDC provided crucial leadership for the region when it assumed maintenance and security responsibilities for the region’s riverfront park system in Hartford and East Hartford. This arrangement is now a national model for world-class waterfront parks.
REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

Trends Shaping Our Region

When the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving sponsored a major event in September, 2002, to highlight the importance of new information about our region revealed in the 2000 Census, CRCOG went to work on a Regional Census Data Profile.

With the release of our Census report in January 2003 at the Regional Stewardship Forum, CRCOG identified some of the major social and economic trends affecting the MetroHartford region. The goal was to build on our region’s great strengths and to face head-on the challenges which can impact our region’s economic vitality and quality of life in years to come.

MetroHartford’s strengths include having: a high median household income; a large percentage of our population with Bachelor’s degrees or higher; and a large segment of our workforce in management and professional jobs. MetroHartford also ranks very high in the national Places Rated Almanac for its arts and cultural offerings, its parks and recreational assets, and its transportation infrastructure.

CRCOG’s Census Trends report investigates five different issues that are crucial to the region’s future:

- Maintaining a competitive workforce
- Aging of the region’s population
- Recognizing our region’s diversity
- The continuing suburbanization of the region
- Income disparity and isolation of poverty in the region

It is our hope that the Census Trends report will help business, civic and government leaders in our region to make informed decisions which work for their benefit and the long term benefit of the region as a whole.

In particular, the Census Trends report documents one challenge for our region – how we tend to separate ourselves along income lines. Working through CRCOG, the region’s Mayors and First Selectmen devoted a great deal of time to this issue during the past year, culminating in the adoption of an Implementation Plan to address municipal fiscal disparities in Hartford and in the region. It is discussed in more detail on the next page.

Capitol Region Partnership

Census Event

Last September the Capitol Region Partnership staged a major event sponsored by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, aimed at helping business, government and civic leaders in the region to use the new data in the 2000 Census to identify trends that impact our region’s economic vitality and quality of life. The goal was to demonstrate how we can use information in the Census along with other sources to help shape the future of our region. This major event, which attracted almost 300 people to the Aetna Auditorium, was the stimulus for CRCOG’s own Census Data Profile—Trends Shaping Our Region.

Legislative Reception

House Deputy Speaker Melody Currey addressed more than 200 attendees at the Partnership’s Legislative Reception in April at the State Capitol. Joining her, from left, is Stephen Cassano, Chairman of the Partnership, and Senate President Pro Tem Kevin Sullivan.
Regional Stewardship Forum
The second annual Regional Stewardship Forum, sponsored by the Capitol Region Partnership and the Metro Hartford Alliance, was held in January of 2003.

Approximately 150 civic, business and government leaders gathered to talk about the region’s future and the region’s priorities. In a series of roundtable discussions facilitated by the Greater Hartford Citizens Network, the following regional priorities were identified in order of priority:

1. Insuring that the region’s future workforce is strong.
2. Building a clear and compelling regional identity, branding and image.

The members of the Partnership have committed themselves to action on these regional priorities.

Working for Balance in the Region - CRCOG’s Municipal Fiscal Disparities Implementation Plan
State law outlines four criteria for determining municipal fiscal disparities: high tax rate, low property wealth per capita, low household income, and population loss. Because the City of Hartford met all four criteria of distress, the law required all of the Chief Elected Officials of the Capitol Region to work together on an implementation plan to address these disparities in conjunction with the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management.

Our Mayors and First Selectmen adopted an Implementation Plan in November, which was intended to:

1. Address some of the most critical causes of disparities in the region.
2. Generate a short list of achievable recommendations from an earlier report.
3. Demonstrate a real commitment on the part of the region, its municipalities, the City of Hartford, and the state government to address these municipal fiscal disparities.

The Implementation Plan includes recommendations and specific action steps for the region, the City of Hartford and the State. These recommendations address a range of issues from education and workforce training for young people in Hartford to strengthening literacy efforts in the city to supporting more access to housing for low and moderate income people in more locations throughout the region. We remain hopeful that State leaders and particularly the Office of Policy and Management will work with CRCOG and the City to implement these recommendations and other initiatives, which will address disparities and promote more balance in our region.

A multi-pronged strategy will be necessary to provide the fundamental change needed to address these disparities. Strategies which: promote cost-effective, public service delivery; level the playing field for property taxes; and provide better access to opportunity for Hartford residents and more socio-economic balance in towns throughout the region are needed.

Federal & State Advocacy
Once again, the region’s municipal leaders worked together to speak with one voice at the State Capitol. Like many states, Connecticut focused on solving its severe budget problems during this year’s legislative session.

CRCOG is devoting an increasing amount of time to advocacy at the federal level. We have made important progress during the past year on some of our highest transportation priorities with the help of our Congressional delegation. Additional earmarks were provided for the New Britain Busway, the Downtown Circulator, and the Jobs Access Program.

In addition, formal requests were submitted to members of our Congressional delegation to secure special earmarks for our regional priorities in the reauthorization of the federal transportation law.
As local officials searched for new and creative ways to stretch their tax dollars this past year, the Municipal Services office expanded its program offerings to help them do just that. Through the addition of new bids to the CRPC’s annual procurement schedule, the sponsorship of several educational seminars and the kick-off of two new efficiency-enhancing projects, member towns were provided with an exciting array of cost-saving opportunities. Here’s a look at our most notable accomplishments of FY 2003.

Cooperation Pays Off
By pooling their requirements for municipal goods and services again this year, the Capitol Region Purchasing Council’s 41 member towns collectively saved an estimated $1,132,705* - a 265% return on CRCOG dues and member contributions!

Utility Cost Control Strategies
But beyond competitive bidding, the agency worked to help towns control other costs. For example, CRCOG brought together a panel of industry experts this spring for a comprehensive energy seminar, and attendees left armed with a better understanding of their natural gas rates and the importance of implementing demand management and conservation strategies on the job.

CRCOG also kicked off its telecommunications auditing initiative earlier this year after selecting an experienced consulting firm and recruiting ten communities to help pilot the venture. The program helps towns to verify the accuracy of both past and current charges for telecom services and to assess if the systems and contractual arrangements in place best serve their needs. Several audits are currently underway and savings statistics will be published as they become available.

Benchmarking Efforts
Twenty-one towns took part in CRCOG’s new vehicle maintenance benchmarking project this past year, and a forum was hosted in March to share findings and to finalize the report. Municipal managers will have extensive staffing, operational and financial information to evaluate different approaches for providing this important municipal service.

CRCOG plans to sponsor a web-based communication chain for fleet maintenance personnel in an effort to formalize and simplify the sharing of information, expertise, equipment and supplies regionally.

Grant Opportunities
As part of the office’s ongoing efforts to help its members locate and secure available governmental, corporate and foundation grant dollars, three editions and over 600 copies of its Grants Flash publication were distributed over the past year.

*Figure includes all CRPC activities, as well as savings generated by CRCOG's Natural Gas Program.
OTHER HIGHLIGHTS - TRANSPORTATION

Environmental Justice

CRCOG implemented its Environmental Justice Action Plan, part of an Environmental Justice study completed last summer, by establishing an Environmental Justice Advisory Board (EJAB) and inviting two members of that Board to become full members of the CRCOG Transportation Committee. The EJAB will be directly involved in the development of the updated Regional Transportation Plan being undertaken in the next fiscal year.

CRCOG is also continuing its work on the Environmental Justice front by creating a Bus User’s Forum. This new initiative came directly out of previous Environmental Justice community meetings where participants told us they needed a place to provide input on the public transit system. CRCOG will be reaching out specifically to Hartford residents making our primary goal to enhance their personal mobility. Quality of the bus service, including shelters, security, signage and any other issues that are important to the bus user will be considered.

Walkable Communities

Pedestrian access and safe, attractive streets enhance the character and identity of the community and create a “sense of place”. But how easy is it for pedestrians to get around in our towns? Do they feel safe? Is their journey a pleasant one?

CRCOG began to answer these questions through a series of Walkable Community Workshops held in June. Part of a highly competitive grant program, the workshops brought two nationally known experts to conduct eight half-day workshops throughout the region. Combining classroom learning with real world problems and hands on solutions, the workshops enabled a variety of participants – citizens, elected officials, town staff, state DOT staff – to view their surroundings with a “new set of eyes”. Workshop results will be made a part of the Pedestrian Plan currently under development.

Bike to Work

Now in its fourth year, Bike to Work continues to grow in popularity. CRCOG staff, working with representatives from several other agencies and area corporations, sponsors a bike to work breakfast once a month for 7 months of the year. The impact of the program is becoming more evident: cycling commuters are seen more often on the streets leading into Hartford, and the local media continues to recognize the program through editorials and articles.

Moving Ahead on the Region’s Bike Plan

Now in its fourth year, Bike to Work continues to grow in popularity. CRCOG staff, working with representatives from several other agencies and area corporations, sponsors a bike to work breakfast once a month for 7 months of the year. The impact of the program is becoming more evident: cycling commuters are seen more often on the streets leading into Hartford, and the local media continues to recognize the program through editorials and articles.
The first sign of the Destination Hartford Signage Project was unveiled at the corner of Gold and Wells Streets in July of 2003. The project is comprised of more than 250 signs that will guide residents, visitors and workers in Hartford to major civic, cultural, governmental, and medical destinations. The effort is led by the Greater Hartford Arts Council’s Hartford Proud and Beautiful arm and sponsored by the city, state and federal government. CRCOG helped assemble funding for this project.

In June of 2003, construction began on the Hartford Job Corps Center. The center will annually train approximately 350 students, ages 16-24, to become skilled workers in facilities maintenance, business and health occupations. The campus will include a dormitory, education building, administrative building, cafeteria, recreational building, vocational training building, child development center, maintenance and storage building, and recreation fields.

The Greater Hartford Citizens Network facilitated the roundtable discussions at this year’s Regional Stewardship Forum and also held its own event, focused on workforce development, at Capital Community College last April. This organization aims to create a cooperative, thriving region by connecting a broad array of citizens who engage in objective research, consensus building, effective advocacy, and action on key public issues resulting in positive community change.

In April the Hartford Courant presented the Key Issues Forum, Preparing the Workforce of the Future: Regional Solutions. The forum emphasized the dependence of the Hartford region’s future – its prosperity and quality of life - on its workforce. A panel of experts provided new ideas, solutions and insights about the Hartford region’s workforce of the future.

The Connecticut Regional Institute for the 21st Century published a report titled, Economic Vitality and Land Use: Recommendations to Link Transportation and Land Use. This report is intended to help business, civic and government leaders understand how development that coordinates transportation, economic, land use and social goals will benefit the State’s future well-being. In doing so we can improve mobility and assure that Connecticut remains a great place to live and work.

The CenterEdge Coalition with the help of Myron Orfield, published the Metropatterns Report, which focuses on the impact of sprawl in Connecticut. The project was sponsored by the Office of Urban Affairs of the Archdiocese of Hartford and many members in its coalition, including CRCOG. To view the document online, visit www.oua-adh.org/CenterEdge_project.htm.

Adriaen’s Landing on the rise.
For Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2002

Revenues
Local Government Assessments $ 400,177
State Grants & Contracts 1,644,998
Federal Grants & Contracts 1,281,767
Interest Income 39,449
Other Grants & Fees 933,590
Miscellaneous Income 3,675
Total Revenues $ 4,303,656

Expenditures
Personnel $ 942,434
Direct Expenses 605,026
Indirect Costs 571,358
Contractual 1,907,782
Total Expenditures $ 4,026,600

Excess of Revenues Over Expenditures $ 277,056

Revenues and Expenditures - Program & Operating

Local
Government
Assessments
9%
Federal
Grants &
Contracts
30%
State Grants &
Contracts
38%
Interest Income
1%
Other Grants &
Fees
22%
Personnel
23%
Contractual
48%
Indirect Costs
14%
Direct Expenses
15%

CRCOG Staff
Administration
Richard J. Porth, Executive Director
Cheryl Assis, Public Safety
Winsome Barnaby
Carmen Torres-Collazo
Viola Heath
Kristin Pauzano

Community Development
Mary Ellen Kowalewski, Director
Hedy Ayers
Maureen Barton
John Guszkowski
Linda Osten

Transportation
Thomas Maziarz, Director
Jennifer Carrier
Daniel Czaja
Sandra Fry
Mario Marrero
Karen Olson
Erik Snowden
Karen Stewartson
Hua Tan

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Page 5 Downtown Circulator graphic provided by the Greater Hartford Transit District.

Page 9 photograph at the Capitol Region Partnership’s Legislative Reception provided by the MetroHartford Alliance.

Page 13 Key Issues graphic provided by the Hartford Courant.

Page 13 photograph of Destination Hartford Signage Project and Page 8 graphic of Arts Council banner provided by the Greater Hartford Arts Council.

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