Capitol Region Council of Governments, Connecticut (June 2005)

CRCOG Annual Meeting Held June 21, 2005

The 37th annual CRCOG meeting was held on June 21 at the Manchester Country Club. Keynote speaker Andrew Walsh of Trinity College spoke on the history of the region.

CRCOG Chair Steve Cassano presents an award to the North Central Municipal Regional Emergency Services Team for their invaluable assistance in the most serious and dangerous police events. From the left, Police Chief Michael Manzi of Suffield, Deputy Chief Donald Hull from Canton, Captain Kelvan Kearse of Windsor, Ronald Desrosiers, Granby Board of Selectmen, Lt. Matthew Willauer and Sergeant Elvis Fabi both from Bloomfield.

CRCOG Chair Steve Cassano presents the Regional Leadership Award to Dr. James Freston for his presentation on the Capitol Region Medical Reserve Corps at a national meeting held by the U.S. Surgeon General.

Mary Ellen Kowalewski, CRCOG Community Development Director, received recognition for her 25 years of service to CRCOG and to the region.
What is the “Walking a Mile” Exchange?

In the Walking a Mile program, town officials visit another dissimilar municipality for a day. They participate in events such as town council meetings, inspection of wastewater plants, and parades. The visiting city then reciprocates the invitation. In other words, city officials get to “Walk a Mile” in the shoes of another municipality that is different from his or her own. The program was highlighted in the January 2005, issue of Governing, the Magazine of States and Localities. Why should cities and towns participate? The Exchange program can: strengthen old relationships and create new relationships, provide an opportunity to generate positive media coverage about municipalities working together, allow municipalities and their staffs to share expertise, offer some in depth understanding of issues faced by dissimilar municipalities, and create the environment for coalition building on joint issues of concern.

The Exchange is sponsored by the Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy at Central Connecticut State University and is based on a highly successful program initiated by the League of Minnesota Cities. To date, 30 municipalities in Connecticut have agreed to participate. For further information, please contact Maria Simao at 860-832-1953.

CRCOG’s Bike to Work Efforts Recognized

The Connecticut Greenways Council awarded CRCOG and its partners of CT DEP, DPH, DOT, All Aboard!, and the American Lung Association with an annual Greenways Award. Tom Maziarz and Sandy Fry of CRCOG are shown at left with the award. Since 2000, CRCOG has spearheaded an effort to encourage more people to bike to work. CRCOG got involved in this program because research for the Bike Plan indicated that many people in the region did not understand that the bicycle has a place on the road and that the bicycle is a means of transportation. The Bike to Work promotion has been in place for five years and the growth in participants from year 1 to year 5 is over 1500%. The program in 2005 is transitioning over to the Central CT Bicycle Alliance, a newly formed bike advocacy group.

New Employees Join CRCOG

CRCOG is pleased to announce that two new employees have joined our staff. Rebecca Augur, (left) CRCOG’s new Community Development Planner, received her Masters Degree in Regional Planning, with honors, from the University of Massachusetts in May of 2005. She fills the planning position vacated by John Guszkowski, who became the Town Planner of Woodstock, CT. Rebecca’s training included
course and studio work in natural resource, land use, and economic development policy and planning. Rebecca also worked as a Research Analyst at the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities from 1999 through 2003, where she researched and analyzed a wide range of municipal and public policy issues on behalf of member communities.

Kristin Pauzano (right) fills a newly created Public Safety Planner position. Kristin earned her Masters Degree in Public Administration from the University of Connecticut in 2000 and a Masters Degree in Education from the University of New Haven in 2005. Kristin is not new to CRCOG -- she worked as a Special Projects Coordinator from 2001 through 2003 and as an intern in both the Municipal Services and Public Safety components. Kristin looks forward to working with the Public Safety Council and CREPC and administering many of CRCOG’s regional homeland security initiatives.

**U.S. Attorney for Connecticut Addresses CREPC**

Kevin J. O'Connor addressed CREPC at May’s monthly meeting. Appointed by the President, Kevin J. O'Connor was sworn in on November 22, 2002 as the forty-eighth United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut. He gave an overview of federal law enforcement and his role in the State and a question and answer session followed.

**Pedestrian Plan is Adopted**

At its meeting on May 25th, the CRCOG Policy Board adopted the region’s Pedestrian Plan. Entitled *Walking Matters*, the document sets out strategies that will help the region to become more walkable, improving the quality of life for all residents. Implementation of the Plan now begins in earnest with discussions with the Connecticut DOT and a training seminar to kick off the effort.
"Smart Growth: Land Use, Regionalism, and Transportation" was the focus of a symposium at the Barney School of Business at the University of Hartford on June 9, 2005. The moderator, Tom Condon of the Hartford Courant, spoke about life in Hartford after the "big bang". Speakers included Armando Carbonell from the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, who described the formation of Mega-Cities and Mega-Regions in the U.S. and around the world; Lyle Wray of CRCOG, who spoke on transit-oriented development as a leverage point for livable communities; and State Representative Lew Wallace from Danbury, who updated the audience on legislative initiatives on Smart Growth. The session also included clips from the Lincoln Institute's film "Making Sense of Place - Phoenix: The Urban Desert" and a discussion of how the issues (and their possible solutions) in Phoenix pertain to Hartford. The audience included officials from state and local government, academia, non-profits, and the private sector.

Final Smart Growth Workshop in Parkville

As part of a US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant administered through the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), CRCOG made a third and final presentation to the Parkville neighborhood. This work has focused upon the application of smart growth concepts to the New Park Avenue area. The neighborhood was presented with a series of Smart Growth Fact Sheets that describe smart growth principles and specific recommendations that can be applied along New Park Avenue. These Fact Sheets are designed to serve as tools for the neighborhood. Residents and neighborhood organizations can use them as they discuss development with City officials, developers, and commercial interests, to illustrate the desired goals and vision for the neighborhood.
Upcoming CRCOG Meetings

Transportation Committee, Monday, July 25, 2005, 12 Noon (if needed)
Policy Board, Wednesday, September 28, 12 Noon
Public Safety Council, Thursday, September 8, 2005, 12 Noon
Housing Committee, Monday, September 12, 2005, 12 Noon
Regional Planning Commission, Thursday, July 21, 2005, 7:00 p.m.
Municipal Services Committee, Tuesday, September 20, 2005, 12 Noon
Executive Committee, Wednesday, August 10, 2005, 12 Noon

The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) is the largest of Connecticut’s fifteen regional planning organizations. Stephen T. Cassano, Chairman; Lyle D. Wray, Executive Director. CRCOG was established under the Connecticut General Statutes as a voluntary association of municipal governments serving the City of Hartford and 28 surrounding suburban and rural communities. Our region is 760 square miles in size and it houses approximately 700,000 people. CRCOG is dedicated to expanding the concept of voluntary cooperation among its member municipalities as the means to successfully respond to many of the region’s pressing governmental and public challenges. Our members are: Andover, Avon, Bolton, Bloomfield, Canton, East Granby, East Hartford, East Windsor, Ellington, Enfield, Farmington, Glastonbury, Granby, Hartford, Hebron, Manchester, Marlborough, Newington, Rocky Hill, Simsbury, Somers, South Windsor, Suffield, Tolland, Vernon, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Windsor, and Windsor Locks.

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