Big Boost for New Britain – Hartford Busway

The week of February 6th brought two rounds of good news for the New Britain-Hartford Busway. On Tuesday, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced that it was restoring the New Britain Busway to ‘recommended’ status. On Wednesday, the Governor proposed $50 million for the busway as part of her new transportation initiative. The busway, which has long been a CRCOG priority and the cornerstone of our regional transit strategy, is now well positioned to meeting its goal of starting construction in late 2007 or early 2008.

The good news from the funding agencies reflects the progress made on the design of the project. Connecticut DOT is nearly finished with the preliminary design phase, which represents about the first 30 percent of design. Preliminary design is finished for the busway sections in New Britain and Newington, and DOT is now focusing on completing the more technically challenging sections in Hartford and West Hartford. DOT has also selected five consultant firms to prepare the final designs. The project was divided into five sections to expedite both the design and construction of the project. This is reflected in the project schedule below that anticipates some sections will begin construction before the design is complete on all five sections.

Here is the schedule for the busway: 2006 (spring) --complete preliminary design; 2006 (fall) --start final design; 2007 -- start construction; 2008 -- complete final design; and 2011 --start busway operations. For more complete information on FTA’s evaluation of the busway check out the CRCOG website at www.crcog.org.
Dave Kilbon Recognized for 8 Years as CRCOG Transportation Committee Chair

Upon assuming the chairmanship of the CRCOG Policy Board in January, David Kilbon, First Selectman of East Granby, relinquished his role as chair of the Transportation Committee. Shown here is CRCOG Director of Transportation Tom Maziarz presenting a plaque to Dave in recognition of his eight years in service to the Transportation Committee. Tom commended Dave not only for his unprecedented length of service as Committee Chair, but also for his exemplary commitment to transportation, civic participation, and regionalism.

CREPC Launches Leadership Seminars

The first of a series of Executive Leadership Seminars for Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee (CREPC) members was held on January 18, 2006. The seminars are designed to hone leadership skills and broaden attendees’ knowledge of the internal and external environment faced by CREPC. Chief William Austin facilitated the introductory seminar, which mainly focused on the philosophy and pinnacles of leadership. The event was attended by close to ninety people representing all facets of public safety.

WMD Civil Support Team Presents to CREPC

Lieutenant Colonel Joe Danao of the 14th Civil Support Team – Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Connecticut National Guard provided an overview of the unit’s mission and capabilities at the Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee (CREPC) meeting, held at the State Armory on December 15, 2005. After the meeting, the CREPC committee was invited to meet members of the WMD team and view their equipment. In the first photo above left CREPC members learn about the mobile laboratory, which can identify select WMD chemical/biological agents. In the second photo, LTC Joe Danao.
**CRCOG Regional Legislative Priorities**

The CRCOG Policy Board recently approved three regional legislative priorities for the CT legislative session that began on February 8, 2006. More detail may be found on the CRCOG website.

**Regional Transportation.** CRCOG will continue to visibly advocate the New Britain to Hartford busway, the Springfield-Hartford-New Haven commuter rail enhancement and for the continuation of the successful downtown Star Shuttle circulator as a transit program that complements public transit improvements.

**Inter-town Service Cooperation.** Build on CRCOG’s proven track record in the areas of purchasing, CAPTAIN communications system and other areas of inter-town cooperation to identify new ways to better serve town residents in the region and to save taxpayer money. Support from the Legislature is sought to offer incentives for inter-town service cooperation planning and to seed cooperative service delivery with a funded pilot of innovative inter-town service cooperation in the CRCOG region.

**Strengthen Support for Plan of Conservation and Development Implementation.** The 2005 Legislature took a number of actions in the area of land use management. The next step is to build on positive steps with incentives for towns to work to move forward on the livable community goals in the plan, and more capacity in regional planning organizations to assist in technical assistance to bring about implementation of regional plans. Transit oriented development, involving a mix of development uses such as housing, retail and offices within one quarter to one half mile of transit is relevant both for the New Britain/Hartford busway, and the Springfield-Hartford-New Haven commuter rail.

**Upcoming CRCOG Meetings**

CRCOG Policy Board, Wednesday, February 22, 12:00 Noon
Municipal Services Committee, Thursday, March 2, 12 Noon
CRCOG Executive Committee, Wednesday, March 8, 12 Noon
CRCOG Community Development Committee: March 9, 12 Noon
Regional Planning Commission, Thursday, March 16, 7:00 p.m.
CRCOG Transportation Committee, Monday, March 20, 12 Noon
Public Safety Council, June 8, 12 Noon.

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