FY 2006 Capitol Region Purchasing Council Savings Totals $1.2 million

The Capitol Region Purchasing Council (CRPC) has calculated the FY2005-2006 savings for participating member and fee-member towns to be $1,196,790! That is an increase in savings of over 180% from FY 2004-2005 ($635,602). The FY 2006 savings also reflect a 260% return on CRCOG dues and non-member municipality fees. Be sure that your municipality is in on the savings - participate in CRPC bid solicitations! The more participation we have, the more buying power all municipalities benefit from!

Region Helps Advance Fuel Cell Bus Technology

US Congressman Larson (photo at left) announced the start of a special project to field test a prototype hydrogen fuel cell bus in the Hartford area. It is one of the first demonstrations in the nation, and the only one in the Northeast. The Congressman emphasized the important role fuel cells will play in securing our nation’s energy future, reducing our dependence on foreign oil, and even addressing the global warming problem. The primary byproduct of fuel cell energy production is water vapor. The project is also important to Connecticut’s economy because it helps maintain the state’s role as a leader in the development and manufacturing of fuel cell technology. The fuel cell power system for the prototype bus is being supplied by UTC Power located in South Windsor.
The press conference for the announcement was attended by about 50 representatives of the public and private sector including the Federal Transit Administration, UTC Power, CT Center for Advanced Technology, CT Department of Transportation, Greater Hartford Transit District, and CT Transit. Mayor Matt Streeter represented the Town of South Windsor, and Lee Erdman represented the City of Hartford. CRCOG Board member Jon Colman, and CRCOG staff Lyle Wray, and Tom Maziarz represented CRCOG. CRCOG played a major role in the early planning and coordination for the project.

CT Transit will operate the new bus on the Star Shuttle route in downtown Hartford, and occasionally on other routes to test it under a variety of driving conditions. Part of the purpose of the demonstration project is to educate the public about this alternative energy source, its air quality benefits, and the safety of hydrogen as a fuel. The downtown route will provide an opportunity to inform numerous downtown employees, residents, persons visiting downtown restaurants, plus many out-of-state residents attending events at the new convention center.

Shown in the photo from left to right: Vicki Shotland, G.H. Transit District; Mike Sanders CT DOT; Congressman John Larson; Mary Beth Mello, Federal Transit Administration; Lyle Wray, CRCOG; Jan van Dorkkum, UTC Power; Steve Warren, CT Transit; Tom Maziarz, CRCOG.

**Transit Oriented Development Assistance**

CRCOG recently completed a Quality-Based Selection (QBS) to retain an on-call consultant for the New Britain/Hartford Busway Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Implementation project. This project will advance the plans prepared for the completed Station Area Planning Project. The Capitol Region Council of Governments offers this project as a resource to the cities of New Britain and Hartford, the towns of Newington and West Hartford, and to public entities with interests related to the New Britain/Hartford busway.

Work undertaken will be in response to specific requests for assistance. The selected consultant has the capacity to:

- Provide economic, market, transportation, and land use data collection and research on the feasibility of attracting transit-oriented development
- Produce TOD site designs
- Write TOD zoning ordinances
- Prepare communication materials including requests for development proposals
• Provide in-depth knowledge of potential state and federal funding sources
• Provide in-depth assessment of development proposals

The consultant team selected to work on this project is led by Crosby Schlessinger Smallridge, LLC (http://www.cssboston.com/). Contact Linda Osten, Project Manager, (losten@crcog.org or 860 522-2217 x 28) with any questions.

Brownfield Assessments Underway

The MetroHartford Brownfields Assessment Program is conducting its first environmental assessments on three sites that have been contaminated by petroleum products in the Town of East Hartford. These sites are owned by Goodwin College, and present a unique opportunity to redevelop former petroleum storage areas to create a Connecticut River campus. This redevelopment will combine the expansion of a regional educational facility with neighborhood revitalization, environmental protection of floodplain land, creation of new recreational opportunities, and increased public access to one of the region’s most important natural resources—the Connecticut River.

Any communities that are aware of sites that may benefit from a Phase 1 or Phase 2 environmental assessment paid for by the regional program—specifically, sites that are suspected to have suffered contamination by petroleum products or other hazardous substances, and that require more information on environmental status to spur redevelopment—should contact Mary Ellen Kowalewski at 522-2217 extension 22 or mkowalewski@crcog.org. The $400,000 in program funds, made available through two grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, is being utilized on a first-come, first-served basis. Applications are made to CRCOG by interested municipalities, and projects that meet EPA eligibility guidelines and other program criteria will be considered for assessment assistance.

Listen to the River Hearings

As a part of its Connecticut River Watershed Initiative, the Trust for Public Land will host a series of Listen to the River hearings over the next few weeks. The hearings intend to bring together groups working on land conservation within the Connecticut River Watershed with citizens, public officials, and the media. The goals of the forum are to increase awareness of the watershed resources and the groups working to protect them; to gain local input into a regional land conservation agenda; and to strengthen partnerships and citizen support for conservation. The public hearing process will help identify important lands for conservation in the Connecticut River Valley, and help to coordinate and determine future efforts on the part of conservation groups.

The Trust for Public Land will host a series of hearings in each of the four watershed states, and release the results in 2007. The NewAlliance Foundation and the Alexander Host Foundation are sponsoring the Connecticut hearings, with co-
sponsorship from several agencies, including CRCOG. For further information, contact Clem Clay at the Trust for Public Land - 413-584-6686 or Clem.Clay@tpl.org. Hearing dates and times are as follows:

**Saturday, September 16, 2006 9:00 am-12:00 pm**
Wesleyan University, Middletown
Subregion: Berlin, Colchester, Cromwell, Durham, East Hampton, Hebron, Portland, Marlborough, Middlefield, Middletown

**Thursday, September 21, 2006 6:30-9:30 pm**
Avon Senior Center, Avon
Subregion: Avon, Barkhamsted, Bristol, Burlington, Canton, Colebrook, Farmington, Granby, Hartland, New Hartford, Simsbury, Winchester

**Monday, September 25, 2006 4:30-7:30 pm**
Connecticut River Museum, Essex
Subregion: Chester, Deep River, East Haddam, Essex, Higganum, Lyme, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook, Salem

**Saturday, September 30, 2006 9:00 am-12:00 pm**
Asnuntuck Community College Auditorium, Enfield
Subregion: Bloomfield, Bolton East Granby, East Windsor, Ellington, Enfield, Somers, South Windsor, Suffield, Tolland, Vernon, Windsor, Windsor Locks

**Tuesday, October 10, 2006 6:30-9:30 pm**
Riverfront Recapture Boathouse, Hartford
Subregion: East Hartford, Glastonbury, Hartford, New Britain, Newington, Manchester, Rocky Hill, Wethersfield, West Hartford

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**Team Building Workshop Scheduled**

The Municipal Services Committee is sponsoring a team building professional development seminar on September 28, 2006 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Wethersfield Police Department’s Community Room. The workshop is focused on helping organizational leaders and managers optimize team performance by providing coaching, training, tools and techniques for effective team functioning. The cost is $45. Registration is open until Friday, September 22nd. Email Jen March-Wackers at jwackers@crcog.org for a registration form. Space is limited, so register today!

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**Upcoming CRCOG Meetings**

Community Development Committee, Thursday, September 14, 12 noon
Municipal Services Committee, Tuesday, September 19, 2006, 12 Noon
Regional Planning Commission, Thursday, September 21, 7:00 p.m., West Hartford Town Hall
Transportation Committee, Monday, September 25, 12 noon
CRCOG Policy Board, Wednesday, September 27, 12 noon
Executive Committee, Wednesday, October 11, 12 noon
Public Safety Council, Thursday, October 12, 12 noon.