Region’s Median Home Sale Price Rises 10.7%

The latest Capitol Region Home Sales Price Report is near completion. The report presents residential sales price data and analysis for fiscal year 2006. A recent slowdown in the housing market is marginally evident in housing sales activity. The Region’s overall sales price continued to increase, although some individual communities had relatively stable, or slightly declining, median sales prices. Also, the number of sales recorded was down slightly from the record high number of sales in fiscal year 2005.

The median sales price for all categories of homes sold (single-family, two-family, three-family and condominiums) increased 10.7% to $237,900. When adjusted for inflation, the increase over the Region’s 2005 median sales price was 5.3%. Seven towns now have median sales prices over $300,000 up from five the year before. Thirty percent of all sales in the Region exceeded the $300,000 threshold.
A Housing Affordability Index is included in this year’s report. The index measures the affordability of the median sales price by housing type for each town and the Region against the Region’s median income, under current mortgage conditions. The index highlights the disparities between municipalities and housing types in the availability of affordable housing in the Capitol Region. The report will be available in early October 2006.

Two More Cities Join Capitol Region Purchasing Council

CRPC is pleased to announce the addition of two more cities to its membership! New Haven and West Haven have joined CRPC to bring the total membership to 61 municipalities. Although they joined under the impetus of the new Sand for Snow and Ice Control bid, both have expressed their interest to be involved in many more CRPC bids. The size of these two cities will greatly increase CRPC’s ability to get volume discounts for all of its members! Welcome, New Haven and West Haven!

Glastonbury Creates a Town Bike Plan

The town of Glastonbury is to be congratulated! Last summer they appointed a committee of citizens interested in bike issues. That committee prepared a Bike Plan that was just adopted by the Town Council. You can take a look at their plan at this link http://www.glasct.org/public_documents/glastonburyct_ParksRec/BikePlan. The plan is 25 pages long, and packed with useful information and clear directions for the town to follow in order to become bicycle friendly. The CRCOG Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee encourages other towns in the region to create town bike plans and pedestrian plans and we stand ready to provide assistance. For more information on the Glastonbury plan contact Ray Purtell of the Glastonbury Recreation Department (purtell@glasct.org, 652-7687). For more information on Bike and Pedestrian plans generally, contact Sandy Fry, sfry@crcog.org, 522-2217, X 20.

Towns Receiving Emergency Operations Center Equipment

Over the past month, municipalities participating in CRCOG’s fiscal year 2004 Homeland Security Initiative have been receiving various equipment, from laptops to smartboards, to upgrade and enhance their local emergency operations centers. Each town was allocated $17,500 and a menu of equipment, devised by the project’s committee. Besides having the minimum of a VHF radio and two fax machines, each town was given the flexibility to choose the equipment that would best fit their needs. Fiscal year 2005’s EOC project will focus on equipping the regional emergency operation centers.
**Update on Manchester Safe Routes to Schools Grants**

In a recent newsletter, we noted that two of the projects submitted by the Town of Manchester for Safe Routes to Schools grants had been selected by the state for funding. What we didn’t know at the time was that only 4 projects were selected statewide, so Manchester’s accomplishment is even more notable. If you want to learn more about the Safe Routes program, contact Sandy Fry, sfry@crcog.org.

Again, congratulations to Manchester!

**First Pedestrian Underpass on Regional Trail System**

The first pedestrian-bicycle underpass constructed as part of our regional trail system was completed this summer in Farmington. A safe crossing for trail users was provided under busy Route 4 west of Unionville. It was built as part of the Farmington River Trail that will eventually link Unionville to Collinsville.

While many trail bridges have been constructed (or reconstructed) over streams and rivers, this was the first trail structure built to take pedestrians and cyclists ‘under’ an existing road. Construction of these types of structures can be expensive and cost prohibitive for a trail project. In this case, it was deemed necessary due to the safety hazard. The terrain was also favorable. Route 4 is elevated and the grade of the trail allows water to drain away from the underpass. This made it possible to use a simple box culvert structure without any expensive drainage systems. The cost of the newly constructed 0.70-mile section of trail, the underpass, and the adjacent parking lot was about $1,500,000. Approximately $450,000 of the cost is attributable to the underpass.

Congratulations to Farmington for such a great design, their dedication to regional trails, and their persistence in seeing the project through to a successful completion.
CRCOG Transportation Committee Tries Out New Meeting Space

On Monday, September 25, 2006 the CRCOG Transportation Committee met at the CRRA’s Mid-Connecticut Project Visitors Center. The facility is fully accessible with available, no charge parking. The facility will be considered for other CRCOG meetings as appropriate. Photo shows CRCOG Transportation chair Jonathan Colman at right and CRCOG Transportation Director Tom Maziarz at left. Photos below show the front of the building and the Committee meeting.

Team Building Workshop a Success!

CRCOG’s Municipal Services Committee hosted a Team Building Workshop on September 28th for 10 municipal managers and department leaders from four towns. Dona Vages returned to offer important information and learning activities to those present. Topics such as how to build a team environment, inspire action, and minimize conflict were covered. Once again, Dona took time to answer individual questions during the workshop and counseled participants on strategies for their personal situations after the program. Plans are already underway to bring Dona back in May 2007. Please email Jennifer March-Wackers (jwackers@crcog.org) with topics of seminars that you would like to attend!

Upcoming CRCOG Meetings

Executive Committee, Wednesday, October 11, 12 Noon
Public Safety Council, Thursday, October 12, 12 Noon.
Community Development Committee, Thursday, October 12, Noon
Municipal Services Committee, October 17, 2006, Noon
Regional Planning Commission, Thursday, October 19, 7:00 p.m., West Hartford Town Hall
Transportation Committee, Monday, November 13, 12 Noon
CRCOG Policy Board, Wednesday, November 15, 12 Noon.

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