New England’s First Hydrogen Fuel Cell Bus Service Launched

On April 10, 2007 ceremonies were held to launch the first electric fuel cell bus in service in New England. The bus will operate first on the free Hartford Star Shuttle route and then in other routes in the region. The project goal is to test the bus in typical transit settings. The only emission form the bus is water vapor based on its use of hydrogen fuel. The bus is powered by a UTC Power fuel cell. In the top left photo, the bus passes the Old State House on Main Street in Hartford. In the second photo U.S. Congressman John Larson and UTC Power President Jan van Dokkum talks with a reporter on the fuel cell bus.

CRCOG Launches Regional Web-based GIS System

Members of the CRCOG Policy Board and Municipal Services Committee witnessed the unveiling of a new regional web-based Geospatial Information System (GIS) at their April meetings. The current Phase One version of the CRCOG Regional Web-based GIS System compiles 10 data layers from municipal, state, federal, and CRCOG sources. These layers include municipal parcel, land use and zoning data; orthographic photos from the CT Department of Transportation; wetlands and soils information from the CT Department of Environmental Protection; FEMA Flood Plain data; and Federal Census data. Though the primary audience is municipalities, the website is accessible to the public.

This regional system will take Capitol Region municipalities beyond their borders to collaborate more efficiently and effectively on regional projects. Smaller municipalities will also be given the opportunity to work with CRCOG staff to develop customized websites for their own use. Phase 2 of this project envisions expansion of the data available. The CRCOG GIS Users Group
Committee will have direct input in the further development of the site in Phase 2. Please contact Erik Snowden (esnowden@crcog.org) if you would like to be a member of this committee. Applied Geographics, Inc. of Manchester, CT and Boston, MA using their General Purpose Viewer customizable software designed the CRCOG Regional Web-based GIS System. The website URL for the CRCOG Regional Web-based GIS System is: http://www.crcog.org/gissearch.

**Purchasing Council Saves $1.5 million in FY 2006-2007**

Through 14 competitive bids, the Capitol Region Purchasing Council saved its 66 members over $1.5 million in FY 2006-07. This significant savings was due to the addition of two bids to the bid schedule and a significant increase in membership over the last year (10 new members). These savings represent an over 350% return for your CRCOG membership dues. Please continue to participate in this important program as new commodities and services are added.

**CAPTAIN Fire Project Kicks Off**

The CAPTAIN Fire Committee, Chaired by East Hartford Assistant Fire Chief William Perez, held its first meeting last month. The $1 million project is part of CRCOG’s Fiscal Year 2005 Homeland Security initiative and aims to expand the successful police CAPTAIN mobile data communications system into fire vehicles. *Photo caption: Chief Perez addresses attendees at the CAPTAIN Fire Committee’s first meeting in March.* The software applications that will be included in the computers are:

- Automated Vehicle Location (AVL) including automated routing
- Interfaced computer assisted dispatch
- Instant messaging
- Managed mobile internet access
- A pre-planning utility
- Incident management software
- Specialized communications

In addition, Fire CAPTAIN has all the infrastructure management features developed by Police CAPTAIN including user auditing, administrative control management, and help desk services. This project has generated a great deal of interest and support and CRCOG looks forward to rolling it out over the next several months.
Purchasing Council Launches e-Procurement Tool

The Capitol Region Purchasing Council is proud to announce the launching of its new e-Procurement tool administered by RFP Depot. This completely online system will streamline all processes of our cooperative bidding. As they become available, CRPC members will be notified by email with a link to enter their quantities for bids online. Once the bid deadline has passed, all tabulation sheets will be available to towns with all attachments and documentation for your decision-making process within a few hours. A minimal 1% administrative fee is charged to all vendors who are awarded Purchase Orders and Contracts from the system (the national average for purchasing cooperatives is 2-3%). This powerful procurement tool is also available to all CRPC members for their own bids! Four online orientation sessions are scheduled for May 2nd and 3rd (10am and 2pm each day). Sign up for one of these sessions today! Please contact Jennifer March-Wackers (jwackers@crcog.org) for more information on this exciting new tool.

CREPC Vice-Chairman Bruce Lockwood Receives C.E.M.® Credential

Bruce Lockwood was recently approved by the IAEM Certification Commission to receive the Certified Emergency Manager® (CEM®) credential. The CEM® designation is the highest honor of professional achievement available from the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM), which has in its membership more than 3,200 emergency managers representing local, state, and federal government; private industry; and military emergency managers. Bruce is only one of two who have obtained the CEM® designation within the state of Connecticut and will be recognized at the IAEM 55th Annual Conference & Exhibit in Reno, Nevada November 11-14, 2007.

CREPC Leadership Program Graduation Ceremony

In early 2006, the first of a series of leadership conferences was held for CREPC members. CREPC Chairman Chief William Austin conducted all five four-hour sessions in an effort to groom future leaders for the organization and enhance the emergency preparedness capabilities of the region. The final meeting was held in mid-April and consisted of a strategic planning session for 2007-2008 as well as a graduation ceremony. The graduating class consisted of approximately thirty CREPC members who had shown dedication to the leadership series through their attendance. In the picture above, Bruce Lockwood receives a framed certificate and award from Chief Austin during the ceremony.
CRCOG/CLEAR to Host Connecticut Land Use Academy

The Land Use Academy (LUA) is a new program of the University of Connecticut Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR). The Academy seeks to provide practical and accessible education for local land use decision makers across the state, focusing on the basic skills needed to serve on a land use board. CRCOG will be co-sponsoring a Capital Region training program in May 2007.

Municipal land use decision makers have the important responsibility of helping to guide the future of their towns. The LUA can help these municipal volunteers better understand the basics of their jobs. The Connecticut Office of Policy and Management support the Academy with funds provided by the state Legislature. The Capitol Region Council of Governments is co-sponsoring the Hartford area training series. Each Academy course is comprised of a core curriculum of three workshops, designed to convey the basic knowledge and skills needed by land use officials to do their jobs. The classes will be held at the West Hartford Town Hall on:

**Thursday, May 10, 2007**
6:30 – 9:00 pm
Roles & Responsibilities of Land Use Commissions

**Wednesday, May 23, 2007**
6:30 – 9:00 pm
Legal Requirements & Procedures of Land Use Decision Making

**Wednesday, May 30, 2007**
6:30 – 9:00 pm
Map Reading for Site Plan Review

Upcoming CRCOG Meetings

Executive Committee, Wednesday, May 9, Noon, CRCOG Board Room
Municipal Services Committee, Tuesday, May 15, Noon, CRRA
Jobs Access, Thursday, May 17, 9:30 a.m., Greater Hartford Transit District
Regional Planning Commission, May 17, 7:00 p.m., West Hartford Town Hall
Transportation Committee, Monday, May 21, Noon, CRRA
CRCOG Policy Board, Wednesday, May 23, Noon, CRRA
CREPC, Thursday, May 24, 9:30 a.m. South Church
Public Safety Council, Thursday, June 14, Noon, South Church
Community Development Committee, Thursday, June 14, Noon, South Church


The 2006 Officers of the CRCOG Policy Board are: David K. Kilbon, Chair, First Selectman of East Granby, Eddie Perez, Vice Chair, Mayor of Hartford, Mary Tomolonius, Treasurer, First Selectman of Canton, Susan Karp, Secretary, Chair, Glastonbury Town Council. Lyle D. Wray, PhD, Executive Director.