CRCOG Applies for $8 Million in Service Sharing Grants

CRCOG submitted 18 applications totaling over $8 million to the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management's Regional Performance Incentive Program. The program was established by Public Act 07-239, Section 8, an Act Concerning Responsible Growth Regional Performance Incentive (RPI) Program, which made $8.6 million available for grants to CT regional planning organizations such as CRCOG. The project applications submitted cover a wide range of local government activities, including public safety, public works, information technology, and general government administration. CRCOG's submission of 18 projects includes ten projects that involve cooperation and coordination with other regional planning organizations in the state including WINCOG, CCRPA, and MRPA. “We are looking forward to OPM’s response to our applications. We hope that this program will continue into the future with dedicated funding. It is with this support from the state that local governments can continue to provide a high level of service for the least tax dollars possible,” said David K. Kilbon, Chairman of the CRCOG Policy Board, First Selectman, East Granby. For more information about the RPI program and for a copy of the applications sent to OPM, please consult the CRCOG website at: www.crcog.org. (In photo: on the right CRCOG Chair David Kilbon signs the RPI application and Jennifer March-Wackers one of the CRCOG staff team on the project.)

CRCOG Receives Award for Agricultural Viability Project

CRCOG received an award from the CT Chapter of the American Planning Association (CT APA) for its Agricultural Viability project at the Chapter’s awards luncheon on November 30th. The Awards Program of the CT APA recognizes outstanding planning initiatives in a number of categories. CRCOG won the 2007 Public Service category for an individual (or group of individuals) acting in a public capacity who has contributed to the public benefits of planning through the promotion or application of sound planning principles or played a significant role in a specific planning project. The Awards Committee commended the process CRCOG staff used to develop model farm-friendly regulations and to reach out to the agricultural community in the region. Community Development Director Mary Ellen Kowalewski and Senior Community Development Planner Rebecca Augur accepted the award on behalf of CRCOG and the 11 municipalities that participated in the project.
Active Transportation Initiative Attracting Interest

CRCOG’s new initiative to create a walkable/bikeable region has attracted a lot of interest in the past month. The Public Input meeting on November 8th was attended by more than 40 people, including elected officials and the media. We have received more than 350 replies to our online survey (www.crcog.org/atisurvey.html) and more than 100 individuals have asked to be on our informational mailing list. (Photo at left, 1,100 bicyclists taking part in the Central CT Bicycle Alliance’s Discover Hartford Tour in September 2007, illustrates the regional interest in bicycling.)

The initiative asks a basic question: imagine the benefits that could be realized with significant additional resources for trails, walking, and biking. To date, respondents are imagining improved mobility, decreased congestion, a stronger economy, cleaner air, healthier people, and vibrant communities. Staff is currently identifying the steps that need to be taken to create a walkable/bikeable region. Make sure that your town is represented on our working group. Contact Sandy Fry (sfry@crcog.org, 522-2217, X20) to learn more about the initiative and to become a part of the effort.

Safe Routes to School for Children – Workshops Available

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs use a comprehensive approach to make school routes safe for children to walk and bicycle. Community leaders, parents and schools are using these programs to better the lives of their children one step at a time. Studies have shown that children who get sufficient daily exercise are healthier and they perform better on tests. A successful Safe Routes to School program is a sustained effort that involves bringing the right mix of people together, identifying the issues and finding ways to improve walking and bicycling conditions. Safe Routes to School programs include engineering improvements along with encouragement, education, and enforcement activities.

CRCOG has developed a workshop series to assist our region’s schools in developing Safe Routes to Schools Plans. The series is designed to guide participants through the plan development process. Ideally, a school that wants to develop a plan will designate a staff member to spearhead the effort. This individual, and a school parent, should attend the workshops.

Workshops will be held: January 10, 2008 @ 2:30pm – 4:00pm; February 14, 2008 @ 2:30pm – 4:00pm; March 13, 2008 @ 2:30pm – 4:00pm. All three workshops will be held at the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority, 211 Murphy Road in Hartford. Contact Sandy Fry (sfry@crcog.org, 522-2217, x20) to let her know who from your town will participate. Our capacity will be limited, so let us know as soon as possible. Sandy can also answer any questions you have on the program.
Demonstrations of CAPTAIN Fire Program a Success

In November, two CAPTAIN Fire committee meetings were held that included a live demonstration of the program from East Hartford, one of the project’s pilot towns. The $1 million project is part of CRCOG’s Homeland Security initiative and aims to expand the successful police CAPTAIN mobile data communications system into fire vehicles. The demonstrations included the system’s mapping, instant messaging, and dispatch features. Project managers fielded questions from future users and the system’s equipment was displayed. Currently, equipment/order forms are being sent out to participating towns and are due back to CRCOG on December 31, 2007. (*Image above shows a Live Dispatch Screen*).

Regional Emergency Deployment (RED) Plan Training Video

This January, CREPC will be releasing its RED Plan training video to member towns. The objectives of RED Plan training are to ensure jurisdictions, departments and agencies understand:

- How and why the RED Plan was developed;
- How the RED Plan relates to federal and local planning efforts;
- When and how to call for the plan, and the process that begins when a call is placed.

The video includes information about the Plan from CREPC Chairman Chief Bill Austin, Regional Planner Carmine Centrella, CREPC Duty Officer Bruce Lockwood, CRCOG Public Safety Director Cheryl Assis, Training Coordinator Dan Scace, and DEMHS Deputy Commissioner Wayne Sandford. In addition to the basic training provided by this video, towns are encouraged to conduct a local table top exercise to solidify the understanding of the RED Plan while they exercise their local emergency management process. (*Photos above shows East Hartford Public Safety Complex Dispatch and Fire Department that recently served as a backdrop for filming of the RED Plan training video.*)

Bicycle and Pedestrian Policy Success

Since October of 2006, CRCOG staff members Sandy Fry and Brenda Watson have taken part in a bicycle/pedestrian safety committee convened by Connecticut DOT. The group focused upon improving the Share the Road language in the Department of Motor Vehicles Driver’s Manual. CRCOG took the lead in drafting
new language and overseeing the revision and editing process. The result is a much expanded section discussing pedestrian and bicyclist rights on the state’s roads. The new manual, with the expanded Share the Road Section, is now available on the DMV website: http://www.ct.gov/dmv/lib/dmv/20/29/ctdriver.pdf.

**CRCOG Launches Route 305 On-Line Corridor Survey**

During the week of November 11, CRCOG launched a survey process reaching out to over 750 residents and over 800 commuters who use the Old Windsor Road / Bloomfield Avenue (Route 305) Corridor. The survey is directly related to the Route 305 Corridor Study that CRCOG is working on with the Towns of Bloomfield and Windsor in cooperation with the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) and project consultant - Clough Harbour & Associates (CHA). The survey seeks to gain an understanding of issues along the corridor such as safety, access, livability and the future of the roadway from the perspective of three subsets of the public – residents, commuters and business owners/employees in and along the Route 305 Corridor. Both postage-paid and web-based surveys have been available and we’ve heard back from approximately 10% of the residents and 17% of the commuters. The employee survey will be available shortly.

The Route 305 Corridor Study will aim toward accomplishing key project goals which include (1) investigating transportation, traffic, transit, access management and pedestrian/bicycle alternatives to improve safety and reduce delays, (2) providing for future, orderly growth and development of vacant and underutilized land in the study area to achieve a more compact transit and pedestrian supportive transportation system, (3) evaluating the feasibility of extending Route 305 from its present terminus at Route 187 to Route 189 in Bloomfield, and finally (4) evaluating the ability of Interstate 91, Interchange 37 to safely and efficiently accommodate existing and future traffic while minimizing traffic impacts. To read more about the study or provide your input by taking the survey, please visit www.crcog.org and click on the quick link to Route 305.

**Upcoming CRCOG Meetings**

**Jobs Access**, Thursday, December 20, 9:30 a.m., Greater Hartford Transit District  
**Executive Committee**, Wednesday, January 9, 2008, Noon, CRCOG Board Room  
**Transportation Committee**, Monday, January 14, Noon, CRRA  
**Regional Planning Commission**, January 17, 7:00 p.m., West Hartford Town Hall  
**Policy Board**, Wednesday, January 23, Noon, CRRA  
**The Bike / Pedestrian Committee**, Tuesday, March 11, 2008, Noon, CRRA  
**Public Safety Council**, Thursday, March 13, 2008 Noon, South Church
Capitol Region Update is published ten times per year by of the Capitol Region Council of Governments (www.crcog.org). The November/December 2007 issue is Volume 39 Number 1. CRCOG was formed January 28, 1968 and organized under the laws of the State of Connecticut. Member municipalities of CRCOG are: Andover, Avon, Bloomfield, Bolton, 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. At December 1, 2007, the officers of the CRCOG Policy Board are: David K. Kilbon, Chair, First Selectman of East Granby, Eddie Perez, Vice Chair, Mayor of Hartford, Vice Chair John Adams, First Selectman of Granby, Mary Tomolonius, Treasurer, First Selectman of Canton, Susan Karp, Secretary, Chair Glastonbury Town Council. Lyle D. Wray, PhD, Executive Director.