Capitol Region Update
June 2008

Capitol Region Council of Governments
Serving the 29 Communities of Connecticut’s Capital Region
www.crcog.org

$5.2 Million in Service Sharing Funds Received

In June, CRCOG received a check for $5,196,027.00 to carry out ten regional service sharing projects. This grant award was made by OPM under the Regional Performance Incentive Grant Program. A project kick-off meeting was held on June 9th, and the Chief Administrative Officers of all participating towns received a background package that included background information on the projects and the procedures that will be followed to carry them out. Working groups are being established to guide implementation, and all projects will be initiated this summer. (In photo: CRCOG staff members Cheryl Assis, Winsome Barnaby, Jen March-Wackers and Mary Ellen Kowalewski hold the check). This award was made in response to applications filed by CRCOG in December 2007.

The projects being carried out in the Capitol Region are: Regional Animal Control Facility, Digital Health Departments, IT Application Sharing and Development, Enhancement of Regional GIS, GIS Flight and Mapping Data, Farmington Valley Trail Maintenance, Regional Traffic Team/Investigation Unit, Regional Law Enforcement Data Sharing, Regional Law Enforcement Training Center, and Regional Emergency Operations Center. For project descriptions and more information on CRCOG’s service sharing initiative, see http://www.crcog.org/service_sharing/index.html.

CRCOG Annual Meeting June 30: Turning Green

There is still time to sign up for the CRCOG annual meeting. The CRCOG Annual Meeting will be held on Monday, June 30 with the presentations in the evening. DECD Commissioner Joan McDonald (photo at left) will speak about her work in helping to craft the New York City “green plan” PlaNYC. PlaNYC is broad based and covers climate change, housing and transportation with an ambitious implementation agenda. The plan may be viewed at: http://www.nyc.gov/html/plany2030/html/plan/plan.shtml. The theme of CRCOG’s annual meeting this year is “Turning Green – What Towns Have Done and Can Do in the Green Arena.” You can register with Debby Rihm at CRCOG at 860 522 2217 ext. 13 or drihm@crcog.org.
Hartford Area Individuals and Projects Receive Main Street Awards

The mission of the Connecticut Main Street Center (CMSC) is to help build economically vibrant, traditional main streets as a foundation of healthy communities. The CMSC announced its 2008 Awards of Excellence at a June 9th ceremony held at the former Wauregan Hotel in Norwich—a key downtown building which has been converted to affordable housing.

Several Hartford area individuals and programs were among the recipients:

- **Main Street Partnership Award:** Upper Albany Main Street, Hartford—Community Policing at Work. Acknowledged as a program that through cooperative efforts has positively impacted the quality of life, the economic value, and image and use of its main street district.

- **Business Owner of the Year:** Herman Todd, President, Living Word Imprints, Upper Albany Neighborhood, Hartford. Recognized for outstanding commitment to the neighborhood, and involvement with local main street revitalization initiatives.

- **Special Event:** Simsbury Main Street Partnership, Preserve America Gala. Recognized as an event with an original theme that promotes a positive image of the district, including celebrating local history and culture.

- **Main Street Executive of the Year:** Marilyn Risi, Executive Director, Upper Albany Main Street. Recognized for her exemplary work in downtown revitalization and demonstrated results.

In addition, the Connecticut Light and Power Company Award for Outstanding Contributions to Main Street Revitalization was presented posthumously to Linda Osten, former Principal Community Development Planner at the Capitol Region Council of Governments. Linda, a well-regarded planner and community activist, was acknowledged for her many contributions to the greater Hartford region through her work at CRCOG and in her Hartford neighborhood.

CRCOG Sponsors All-Hazard Incident Management Team Training

The US Fire Administration’s brochure describes the All-Hazard Incident Management Team Technical (AHIMT) Assistance Program as “Synergizing multiple disciplines into a united team”. The 32 people that attended AHIMT training June 9-14 now have a much better understanding of what that means, and what it takes to manage a large scale incident. This course built on the group’s current training and experience in emergency management and response. During the course, the class broke into four 8-person teams representing the Command and General Staff positions of the Incident Command System. Each team managed several
scenarios, built and briefed Incident Action Plans, and felt real time pressure to perform in a stressful situation with limited resources. Capitol Region Incident Management Team (CR-IMT) development will continue with position specific training, team training sessions, participation in exercises, response to regional incidents, and additional AHIMT sessions to train additional team members. The CR-IMT is administered and operational under CREPC’s Regional Emergency Support Function 5, Emergency Management. (Photo above shows the AHIMT “Mud Fire” Incident Action Plan briefing).

Manchester Holds Full-Scale Avian Flu Exercise

On June 23rd Manchester conducted an exercise involving the pandemic avian influenza, in which many CREPC members participated and the Capitol Region Medical Reserve Corps played a large role. The scenario involved a medical surge at Manchester Memorial Hospital, resulting in the activation of an exterior medical triage unit and an alternative care facility at one of the local schools. Manchester recruited 125 volunteer victim patients who went through the entire triage and admission process. The emergency operations center, pictured to the left, was in full force.

State Bike Pedestrian Committee Bikes in the Region

The Connecticut Department of Transportation is updating its state bicycle and pedestrian plan and has enlisted a committee of advocates and planners from throughout the state to serve as an advisory committee. At the first meeting, CRCOG was challenged to select a meeting location and a bike route to the location for the second committee meeting so that attendees could experience our state’s roads from the cyclist’s point of view. Several committee members met at a park ‘n ride lot south of Silver Lane in East Hartford and bicycled to the meeting in Union Station in Hartford. Thanks to Vicki Shotland and GHTD staff for permitting the intrepid group to park their bikes right inside the meeting room in the GHTD offices.

Committee members en route to the meeting demonstrate the value of a wide shoulder
**CRCOG Participates in Meeting of Bike/Pedestrian Experts**

On June 9th and 10th, Simsbury and the region hosted the Northeast Regional Forum for the Active Transportation Campaign, a program sponsored by the Rails to Trails Conservancy, a national non-profit that advocates for multi-modal transportation. Active transportation is walking and bicycling for daily travel and the Active Transportation Campaign is intended to “make the case” that active transportation is needed and should be funded in the next federal surface transportation authorization. Bike/pedestrian experts from ten northeastern states attended the meeting to discuss their plans to create communities that are walkable and bikeable. The Hartford region was at the table with a representative from CRCOG and also from the City of Hartford and the Farmington Valley Trails Council. A representative from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission in Springfield, MA also took part. Ian Thomas, PhD, Executive Director of the PedNed Coalition in Columbia, MO, was on hand to describe how his community, as a non motorized pilot project, is putting $25 million of federal funds to use to improve walkability and bikeability. Dr. Thomas brought his folding bike with him and rode from Union Station (he carried the bicycle on the train like a piece of luggage) with several other cyclists to the Simsbury Inn, site of the conference.

**CRCOG Staff Member Recognized as Greenway Advocate**

At the June 6th Connecticut Greenway Awards, CRCOG staff member, Sandy Fry, was recognized by the Governor’s office for her work in bicycle planning: “For many years, Sandy Fry has been THE go-to person for bicycle and pedestrian transportation issues in the Capitol Region. As a planner for the Capitol Region Council of Governments, she recently coordinated the development of the Active Transportation Initiative, which imagines the possibilities that could result from taking the region’s bicycle and pedestrian plans to the next level. Sandy also lends her knowledge to the state Recreational Trails Advisory Committee and advises the CT Greenways Council as well. Finally, the success and growth of the Bike to Work program in the Capitol region is due in no small part to Sandy's vision and enthusiasm.”

**New Staff at CRCOG: Pramod R. Pandey**

Pramod R. Pandey has joined the Transportation Department at CRCOG as Senior Transportation Planner/GIS Analyst. Pramod began his career as a Civil Engineer exploring new water sources and supervising the construction of health care centers in Kathmandu, Nepal. He has also held many senior positions in the social services industry in St. Louis, MO where he directed research and support operations. Pramod’s education includes a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering; a Masters in Art, with a concentration in Planning and Community Development from Western Illinois University; and a Masters in Social Work from Washington University. His most recent position was with the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency in Bristol, CT. CRCOG welcomes Pramod to our team.
Upcoming CRCOG Meetings

Jobs Access, Thursday, July 17, 9:30 a.m., Greater Hartford Transit District
Regional Planning Commission, Thursday, July 17, 7:00 p.m., West Hartford Town Hall
Transportation Committee, Monday, July 28, Noon, CRRA Trash Museum Board Room
Executive Committee, Wednesday, August 13, Noon, CRCOG Board Room
Bike/Pedestrian Committee, Tuesday, September 9, Noon, CRRA
Community Development Committee, Thursday, September 11, Noon, South Church
Public Safety Council, Thursday, September 11, Noon, South Church
Municipal Services Committee, Tuesday, September 16, Noon, CRRA
Policy Board, Wednesday, September 24, Noon CRRA Trash Museum Board Room