CRCOG Assists Glastonbury to Secure $2.2 Million for Main Street Traffic Signals

The Town of Glastonbury submitted an application under the Urban Surface Transportation Program for upgrading and interconnecting six signalized intersections on Main Street between Putnam Boulevard and Welles Street. After further review and discussions with Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) staff, CRCOG submitted the application for funding under the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality program. ConnDOT field investigations and analyses have determined that a measurable air quality improvement would be realized by this signal system enhancement and FHWA endorsement of the project is expected shortly. The Town intends to hire a consultant for the design phase and construction would likely occur during or after the year 2010.

Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee Gets New Leadership

At the November Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee (CREPC) meeting, Dan Vindigni (at left in photo), Enfield’s Assistant Town Manager and Emergency Management Director, was elected as the new CREPC Chair. Since the inception of CREPC seven years ago, this position has been held by West Hartford’s Fire Chief William Austin. Chief Austin announced that he would stay involved in the committee as a member and also as the Chair of Emergency Support Function 4 – Firefighting. Also elected in November as 2nd Vice-Chair was Laurie Ann Scotti, Senior Project Manager at The Hartford and Chair of ESF 14 – Business Continuity Planning. Bruce Lockwood, Emergency Response Coordinator of the Burlington Health District and Chair of ESF 7 – Resource Management, remains in the position of 1st Vice-Chair.
At the December CREPC meeting, Chief Austin (at right in photo above) was recognized for his work on regional emergency planning initiatives by Chair Vindigni as well as the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) Commissioner Skip Thomas. He received a standing ovation from the members for his leadership and dedication throughout the years.

**CRCOG Participates in US Surgeon General’s Roundtable**

Through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Childhood Overweight and Obesity Prevention Initiative, *Healthy Youth for a Healthy Future*, Acting Surgeon General Admiral Steven Galson, is touring the nation to discuss best practices for preventing childhood obesity at the community level. The Roundtables provide an opportunity for communities to share their successes and discuss ways to collaborate with businesses, faith-based organizations, schools and others. Sandy Fry, Principal Transportation Planner at CRCOG, was asked to be a speaker during the Hartford stop of the Surgeon General’s tour, to discuss how the built environment has been linked with the inactivity epidemic and how it is affecting the overall health of our communities. Ms. Fry noted that as the regional planning agency, CRCOG, is committed to improving the walkability and bikeability in the Capitol Region by helping our towns advance programs like the *Safe Routes to Schools* program and informing and encouraging our partners both traditional and non-traditional, about all the benefits of improving the ability to walk and bicycle. By providing more transportation choices, we can alleviate congestion, improve air quality, and improve safety. In addition, we can produce public health benefits by rethinking how we travel from one place to another.

CRCOG has also finalized the 2008 *Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan: The CRCOG Commitment to a Walkable Bikeable Region*. This is an action plan that will create a vision of what the region can become with a strong focus upon Active Transportation. The plan is available to view and can be downloaded from our website at [http://www.crcog.org](http://www.crcog.org). To learn more about the Safe Routes to Schools program, go to [http://www.ctsaferoutes.org](http://www.ctsaferoutes.org).

**Benefits to CRCOG Member Towns in 2008**

In 2008 the 29 towns making up CRCOG received a number of benefits from banding together to work on regional challenges. The following are several highlights of the year.
Service Sharing. CRCOG was awarded almost $5.2 million in grants from the state’s Office of Policy and Management (OPM) Regional Performance Incentive Program. The grants are funding ten service municipal sharing projects that cover a broad range of local government services including Public Safety, Information Technology, Public Works, and Public Health.

Purchasing Council. Purchasing saved towns approximately $1.8 million with joint bids and $333,000 for the Natural Gas program.

Brownfields Assessment. Since 2004, the MetroHartford Brownfields Assessment Program has assisted 14 projects in nine communities—a total expenditure of $631,750 in EPA grant funds on behalf of member municipalities. CRCOG has received $800,000 in EPA grants to conduct the program. In FY 2008, the Capitol Region Council of Governments continued its MetroHartford Brownfields Assessment Program, which helps municipalities conduct environmental assessments of sites suspected of contamination by petroleum products or other hazardous substances, in order to aid in their redevelopment.

Pre-Disaster Preparation. In FY 2008, CRCOG completed the Capitol Region Pre-Disaster Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan, a two-year effort funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The plan will make participating municipalities eligible to apply for certain FEMA hazard mitigation project funds. The purpose of this plan is to set forth strategies to reduce the loss of life and property, economic disruptions and the cost of post-disaster recovery for Capitol Region communities. Unlike other emergency plans already adopted for the region, this plan focuses on reducing or eliminating the impacts of natural hazards only. Formal approval, by both FEMA and a local legislative body, of a Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan is required to apply for certain hazard mitigation project funds.

Upcoming CRCOG Meetings

Community Development Committee, Thursday, January 8, Noon, CRCOG
CT River Assembly, January 8, 7:30 p.m., Wethersfield Council Chambers
CRCOG Executive Committee, Wednesday, January 14, Noon, CRCOG Board Room
Jobs Access, Thursday, January 15, 9:30 a.m., Greater Hartford Transit District
CREPC, Thursday, January, 15, 9:30 a.m., South Church Hall
Regional Planning Commission, January 15, 7:00 p.m., West Hartford Town Hall
Municipal Services Committee, Tuesday, January 20, Noon, CRCOG Board Room
Transportation Committee, Monday, January 26, Noon, CRRA Trash Museum
CRCOG Policy Board, Wednesday, January 28, Noon, CRRA Trash Museum
Bike/Pedestrian Committee, March 10, Noon, CRCOG Board Room
Public Safety Council, Thursday, March 12, Noon, South Church
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