



CRCOG News

Capitol Region Council of Governments

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Serving the 30 Communities of Connecticut's Capital Region

Sustainable Knowledge Corridor Consortium Convenes



The inaugural meeting of the Sustainable Knowledge Corridor Consortium was held on May 24, 2011 at Windsor Town Hall. Over 75 state, federal, and municipal officials, and representatives of non-profit organizations, gathered to learn about a \$4.2 million HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant, and commit to participation in this three-year effort. Dwayne S. Marsh, Senior Advisor, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Sustainable Communities, and Jessica M. Dominguez, Brownfield Sustainability Lead and a Member of the Federal Interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities—New

England Regional Committee, shared national perspective on HUD, DOT and EPA efforts to support sustainable community development. Douglas Fisher of Northeast Utilities provided background on the Knowledge Corridor and the Hartford/Springfield Economic Partnership. Executive Directors Lyle Wray of CRCOG and Tim Brennan of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) provided an overview of grant activities. The purpose of the HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program is to support metropolitan and multi-jurisdictional planning efforts that integrate housing, land use, economic and work force development, transportation and infrastructure investments. CRCOG was the lead applicant for this grant. Other MPO partners in project are the PVPC which serves Springfield, MA and 42 other communities, and the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency seven municipalities. Eighty communities will benefit from the grant activities. A Consortium Partnership of 37 diverse organizations will guide the work.

Spotlight on Sustainable and Livable Communities

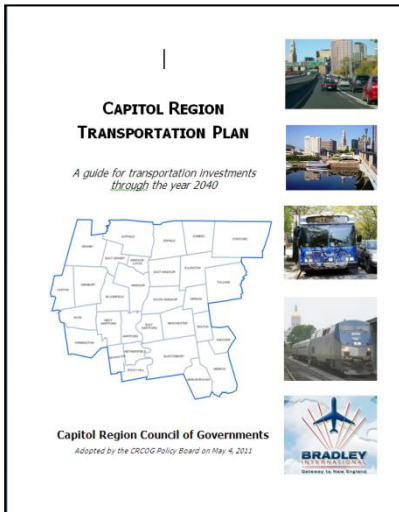


How do you get around the region? Do you have viable options besides making use of an automobile? Through our planning efforts, CRCOG has been working to make **bicycling** a more viable option for more people by working on the 4 “E’s”: Engineering, Education, Enforcement, and Encouragement. We work with our towns, with state agencies, and with advocacy groups to flesh out design ideas, to share information, to identify funding sources, and to plan programs that get more people biking on a regular basis. You have probably noticed new street markings designating bicycle lanes and shared lanes. You may have learned of bike safety classes that give bicyclists the tools they need to ride safely and confidently. May was National Bike Month. Photo at left shows Commissioner Dan Esty of the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, who bicycled from Cheshire to Hartford as part

of National Bike to Work day. He is pictured here with bicycling CRCOG staffers Lia Huang, Sandy Fry, and

Emily Moos. Please contact Sandy Fry, Bicycle and Pedestrian Planner, sfry@crco.org, 860-522-2217 x220 to learn how CRCOG can assist you in working toward a more bikeable region.

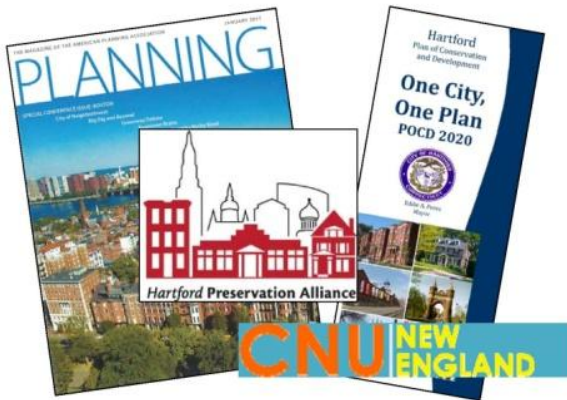
Long Range Transportation Plan Adopted for the Region



On May 4, 2011 the CRCOGB Policy Board adopted an updated Long Range Transportation Plan for the Region. Federal regulations require an update of this plan every four years. The Plan describes a comprehensive program for improving our transportation system to meet travel needs through the year 2040. For the most part, it is a *systems level* plan that provides general policy guidance. It defines the Region's greatest needs, identifies which problems are the Region's highest priority, and outlines how the Region should spend its limited capital funds. The Plan is also the sum of many specific and detailed studies. The recommendations of those studies, such as the Regional Transit Strategy, the bicycle and pedestrian plan, and adopted corridor studies, are summarized in this Plan. A detailed financial plan is also included, given the fact that we are required to present a Plan that is "fiscally constrained". The draft Plan was made available for public comment for more than 30 days and a public information meeting was scheduled.

Notice of opportunities to comment was made available in the media, and through emails to more than 1440 persons on the CRCOG mailing list. The final Plan was modified to reflect many of the comments received. The Final Plan, along with an Executive Summary, is available on the CRCOG website. A Spanish-language version of the Executive Summary is being developed and will be posted on the website soon.

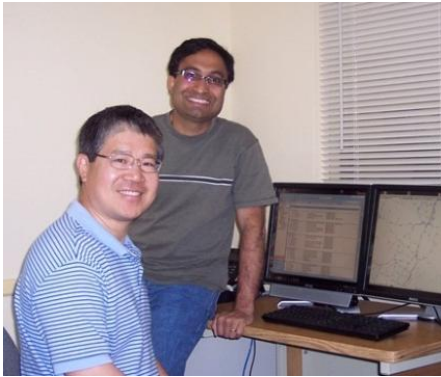
I-84 Viaduct Study Recognized



The I-84 Viaduct Study has continued to receive significant attention in Hartford, in New England, and throughout the United States. The Study was featured in the American Planning Association's *Planning Magazine*, a widely read publication. The article described the tremendous potential this project holds to enhance the community, address transportation infrastructure needs, and promote economic development. The New England Chapter of the Congress for New Urbanism named the I-84 Viaduct Study a recipient of one of the 2011 Urbanism Awards at their Sustainable Urbanism Summit. CNU-NE promotes walkable, mixed-use neighborhood development,

sustainable communities, and healthier living conditions. The City of Hartford honored the Study for innovative analysis of rebuild alternatives and advancement of One City One Plan, the City's Plan of Conservation and Development. The Hartford Preservation Alliance has recognized the Study for its plan to revitalize Hartford's neighborhoods. For more information on the I-84 Viaduct Study, please visit the project website at <http://www.crco.org/viaduct.html>

CRCOG Travel Forecast Model Update



CRCOG's Transportation Department is currently in the process of updating our travel demand forecast model which is the technical foundation to our planning work. The model is a complex planning tool widely used to prepare forecasts of automobile and transit travel. Data from over 90 towns, 70 from Connecticut and the rest from Massachusetts, is included in the model and we have over 1,800 traffic analysis zones. The success of the model is dependent on model updates and constant management by staff. Shown in photo at left Ming Zhao and Pramod Pandey of the CRCOG Transportation staff. CRCOG has started updating the travel demand forecast model to reflect 2010 travel conditions (previously 2005) and the model will be extended to 2040 (previously 2030) as the future forecast year. The model update requires inputting current and future demographic and socio-economic data, such as population and number of household, and a thorough understanding of current and future employment distributions. It also requires detailed traffic data inputs such as average daily traffic volumes. CRCOG has started collecting data from multiple sources, including the 2010 Census, the Connecticut Department of Labor and the Connecticut Department of Transportation and will be reviewing and analyzing the data over the next few months.

CRCOG Transit Planning Receives Award



At their Annual Dinner on May 31, the North Central Regional Mental Health Board recognized the joint efforts of the Town of Enfield and CRCOG in working to develop transit service within the town of Enfield, particularly focusing upon the Village of Thompsonville. This effort began with the requirement in the 2005 transportation authorization (SAFETEA-LU) that regions prepare locally coordinated human services transportation plans. CRCOG jumped into this planning process by reaching out to groups that we don't regularly work with, including consumers of human services transportation. We discovered a large gap in transportation services for individuals with mental health needs, especially those working toward recovery. The Connie Johnson Award was presented to Sandy Fry of CRCOG, Pam Brown, Social Services Director in Enfield, and the members of the Second Wind Clubhouse, who clearly articulated their needs for transportation. The award recognized CRCOG for "listening, building new partnerships and advocating for better transportation options on behalf of individuals with serious mental health needs."

Federal Government Cuts Homeland Security Funding



The Federal Department of Homeland Security recently announced that the Hartford Region was cut from the list of eligible applicants for the 2011 Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Funding along with 30 other regions. Bridgeport is the only other Connecticut UASI jurisdiction and they were also removed from the list. In addition, the State of Connecticut will receive 42% less in State Homeland Security Grant Program funds in FY 2011. The Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) provided directly to our communities will remain stable and the Metropolitan Medical Response System and Citizen Corps grants will be reduced slightly. CRCOG will be working with our Congressional delegation and partnering with the Bridgeport UASI

to ensure we are placed back on the list for 2012 funding. The impacts of these cuts will likely be seen in two years as we are currently spending FY 08 and 09 funds.

South Windsor Supports Biking and Walking



As the State of Connecticut took a huge leap up the League of American Bicyclists' (LAB) Bicycle Friendly State Rankings (now 21st up from 40th last year), South Windsor has also taken a huge leap toward becoming a Bicycle Friendly Community. This year LAB awarded the Town an Honorable Mention in their assessment of Bicycle Friendly Communities. Through cooperative support between the Mayor, Town Council, Town Staff and the Community, the Town is taking great strides toward becoming a more walkable and bikeable community. On May 15th, Mayor John Pelkey rode his bike to a ribbon cutting ceremony for new bike lanes despite a major downpour. The Town is continuing fourth grade bike safety classes this year and the High School held a very successful Bike and Walk to School event. South Windsor Walk and Wheel Ways, a community organization, has developed a Master Plan that identifies network connections, amenities, education and enforcement needs to create a pedestrian and bicycle friendly environment.



CRCOG Staff Wishes Debby Rihm Well



CRCOG staff shared cake to thank Debby Rihm for her work as office manager and staff to the executive director at CRCOG. After more than seven years at CRCOG, Debby Rihm has decided to move on to other endeavors. We thank Debby for her years for service and wish her the best for the future.

Generator Grants for Four Communities in

Region III



Congratulations to the towns of Bristol, East Haddam, Middletown, and Vernon for their recent generator grant awards! Region III applications were reviewed and prioritized by a committee of CREPC members (two emergency management directors and one police department representative), assisted by CRCOG staff. The committee considered each application on its own merits, but was also guided by CREPC's Strategic Plan and Targeted Capabilities Assessment. As there was no specific allocation of funding to each region, DEMHS determined the final awardees after a statewide review of the priority applications from the five regions. These awards will provide a total of \$457,553 in grant funds – which will be matched by an additional \$356,950 from the towns – for four new generators. Three will be used in shelters and a fourth in a municipal emergency operations center. All four will enhance Region III's emergency preparedness.

New Program Prepares Citizens for Disaster



“Individual and community preparedness efforts can enhance resilience in the wake of a disaster.”¹

With that in mind, CRCOG’s Public Safety team built a plan to enhance individual and community preparedness and selected GMMB via an RFP as the lead contractor. The kick off meeting with GMMB was held on May 2 and 3, 2011 with an eye on meeting the following goals: creating a culture of preparedness; providing a single, reliable source for local preparedness information; developing an online resource that provides information about the importance of preparedness, how to prepare, volunteer opportunities, content for businesses, content for functional needs populations and

developing a marketing plan to raise awareness of the program, promote the website and encourage citizens to take the necessary steps to increase their level of preparedness. In the coming months we will be gathering data to help shape effective program messages and content. Once we have the research to guide us, messages will be written and web content developed that will get people’s attention. Once we have their attention, we hope they will act to increase their own preparedness, hence the region’s resilience. Look for more information later this year in both English and Spanish versions.

Disaster Planning for People in Long Term Care Facilities



Russell Phillips and Associates, LLC developed the region’s Long Term Care Mutual Aid Plan (LTC-MAP) during 2010 with funding provided by the FY 08 Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant. With the plan now in place, how do we ensure it is understood and able to be executed?

Answer: **LTC-MAP Annual Meeting**

(Mandatory for all members). Approximately 200 members from the Region’s 79 long term care facilities attended and heartily participated, in the May 17 activities. During this event enhancements to the LTC-MAP were reviewed, recent disasters were discussed and guest speakers, case studies and a group exercise were presented. This planning effort has enhanced our ability to share resources in a disaster and provide the needed care for people in these facilities or other people needing similar resources during a disaster. This dedication will soon require an annual member contribution of approximately \$250 annually to offset costs of plan upkeep. This is a small price to pay when you consider this: Cost of membership is \$250 annually but the value of being prepared is priceless.

Upcoming Functional Exercise on Anthrax Attack

The Capitol Region will be conducting a Functional Exercise for Public Health and Medical Services on June 15th, from 8:00 am until 12:00 noon. The scenario is an anthrax attack at two of the independent colleges in the Region (St. Joseph’s and Wesleyan). The attack results in hundreds of hospital admissions, activation of closed Points of Dispensing (PODs) stressing local public health

and hospital resources. Local health departments participating include West Hartford/Bloomfield Health District, and Middletown Health Department; hospitals participating include; Hartford, St. Francis, Hospital of Central CT, Rockville, Manchester, John Dempsey, Bristol Hospital, and CT Children's Hospital. This series of exercises focuses on WMD and has been preceded by a number of seminars and workshops to expose local responders to regional and state response and coordination plans. Tetra Tech EM, Inc. is the primary contractor for the exercise which is being supported by CRCOG contractors Dan Scace, Bill Perkins, and Carmine Centrella. Interested CRCOG Policy Board members and other VIPs will have an opportunity to observe exercise activity from the Regional Coordination Center located at 321 Olcott Street in Manchester. The Functional Exercise will be followed by an After Action Report conference in July as well as additional seminars and workshops for tactical communications, integration of emergency management at local, regional and state levels, and hazardous materials / bomb squad responses.

Upcoming Meeting Dates

CRCOG Policy Board – September 28, 2011, Noon, CRRA

CRCOG Executive Committee – August 10, 2011, Noon, CRCOG

CT River Assembly – September 8, 2011, at 7:00 p.m., Wethersfield Town Hall

Municipal Services – June 21, 2011, Noon, CRCOG

Capitol Region Jobs Access Task Force – July 21, 2011, 9:30 a.m., CRCOG

CREPC – June 16, 2011, 9:30 a.m., South Church

Regional Planning Commission – September 25, 2011, 7:00 p.m., West Hartford Town Hall

Transportation Committee – June 27, 2011, Noon, CRRA

CRCOG Policy Board – September 28, 2011, Noon, CRRA

CRCOG ANNUAL MEETING – June 9, 2011, Noon, Boat House

Bike/Pedestrian Committee – June 14, 2011, Noon, CRCOG

Public Safety Council – June 18, 2011, Noon, South Church



Capitol Region Council of Government

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CRCOG News is published six or more times per year by of the Capitol Region Council of Governments (www.crcog.org). The May-July 2011 issue is Volume 43 Number 3. 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, Stafford, Suffield, Tolland, Vernon, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Windsor, and Windsor Locks. The officers of the CRCOG Policy Board are: Mary A. Glassman, Chairman, First Selectman of Simsbury, John E. Adams, Vice Chair, First Selectman of Granby, Richard J. Barlow, Secretary, First Selectman of Canton, and Lou A. Spadaccini, Mayor of Manchester, Treasurer. Lyle D. Wray, PhD, Executive Director.