

Capitol Region Council
of Governments

CRCOG News

October 2011

Serving 30 Communities in Connecticut's Capital Region
241 Main Street 4th Floor
Hartford CT 06016 www.crcog.org

Tropical Storm Irene – Food, Ice and Water Distributed



From September 1 to 4 Regional Emergency Support Function-5 (Emergency Management) and members of the West Hartford Fire Department assisted in delivering needed supplies to towns in DEMHS region 3. For towns unable to transport pallet size supplies CREPC RESF-5 reached out to Hartford Distributors for the use of a 32 foot box trailer. The West Hartford Fire Department supplied the qualified drivers and tractor to pull the trailer, and RESF-5 Duty officers assisted in the loading and unloading of the supplies. Over three days, the CREPC RESF-5 traveled over 300 miles delivering supplies to Andover, Bloomfield, East Haddam, Hebron, Marlborough, West Hartford, and Tolland. In total the RESF-5 Commodities Unit delivered 11 tractor trailer loads amounting to: 22,272 MRE's, 756 Bags of Ice and 46,704 bottles of water. In upper photo RESF-5 Coordinator Bill Austin, RESF-5 Duty Officer Bill Perkins and members of the West Hartford Fire Department make delivery to Andover food distribution site. In lower photo CT National Guard loading Capitol Region Commodities Unit at Rentschler field, truck donated by

Hartford Distributors.

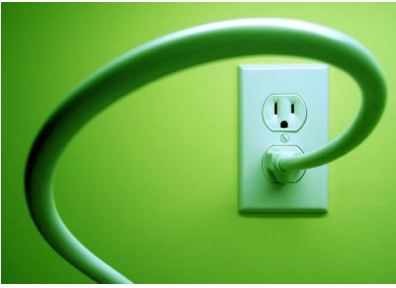
New Haven–Hartford–Springfield Rail Advances



On September 19, Governor Malloy announced the release of \$30 million in federal funding for the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield (NHHS) passenger rail corridor, monies the state of Florida had declined. The funding will be used to double track approximately 6 miles of the corridor beginning just north of the Hartford Station and extending to the Windsor Station. The work will also include improvements to a freight siding in the Hartford Yard and safety improvements to at-grade crossings. Connecticut previously received \$40 million for double track work between Newington and

Meriden to reduce delays and improve travel time. In November the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) will be releasing the Draft Environmental Assessment / Environmental Impact Evaluation. The environmental document will describe the program components, identify the alternatives, summarize the environmental impacts and highlight a series of measures that avoid, minimize or mitigate program impacts. The public will have the opportunity to comment on the document at a series to public hearings to be scheduled in December. More information on the NHHS Rail Project can be found at www.nhhsrail.com

CRCOG Electricity Auction Nets Savings for Towns



The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) conducted a reverse auction for electricity and related services with the assistance of our consultants at World Energy for its 13 member CRCOG Electricity Consortium on October 11, 2011. Savings were between \$230,000 and \$830,000. When calculating savings of current prices per kWh versus the new price, an annual total of \$833,902 was saved. When comparing the lowest bid price to the second lowest bid price from the auction, the Consortium saved an impressive annual total of \$234,547. The contract

will go into effect for most of the Consortium of members on January 1, 2012. The final prices (including fees from CRCOG and World Energy) will be between \$0.07363/kWh to \$0.07540/kWh, depending on pricing group. Contracting is with Liberty Power, a minority-owned business. CRCOG is pleased to offer such great pricing to our Consortium members using an innovative competitive bid procurement tool.

Capitol Region Purchasing Council Expands

The CRPC now counts 88 members -- 86 municipalities and 2 agencies -- in its cooperative purchasing program. The grassroots success of this group has been built on its annual and biennial bid offerings as well as its energy and construction programs. The CRPC Annual Meeting will be held Thursday, October 27, 2011 in West Hartford and hope that all CRCOG members will attend. This important free meeting not only reviews the year's accomplishments, but also reviews current bid opportunities and sets goals for the group. Please RSVP to mbarton@crcog.org if you plan to attend.

CRCOG Staff Finds New Ways to Get to Work



The first week of October marked the start of a CRCOG staff initiative to reduce the number of single occupant vehicular trips commuting to work, traveling to meetings, and running personal errands outside of the office. Throughout this inaugural week, staff reduced their vehicle miles travelled by 531 miles, saving 27 gallons of gas and averting 0.27 tons of CO2 from being emitted into the air. Staff members walked, biked, carpoled, and took the bus instead of driving alone. Participants shared their experiences and adventures at a celebration lunch and

look forward to continuing the effort in the future, making this a healthier, more sustainable Capitol Region.

General Government Access to State Broadband



On October 13, 2011, the CT Regional e-Government Steering Committee from CRCOG met with Mark Raymond, CIO of the CT Department of Administrative Services and John Vittner of the CT Office of Policy and Management to discuss municipal access to state broadband. The state is building out a network to public safety facilities under the federal Broadband Technology Opportunity Program (BTOP). This network will be completed by September 2013. Municipalities have been requesting access to this new broadband network for general

government purposes. Mr. Raymond assured the group in his presentation that municipalities will have general government access to this broadband network. In addition, he mentioned that a municipal advisory group would be established in March 2012 to assist in the planning and build-out phases of the overall Broadband Blue Print Advisory Board. We are pleased with the responsiveness to our multiple requests for access to the BTOP network and look forward to relaying more

information about opportunities for our member municipalities to connect and create economies of scale for a myriad of back office functions.

CRCOG Awarded Grant to Update Regional Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan



The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) recently notified CRCOG that we would be awarded a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant to update the 2008 Capitol Region Pre-Disaster Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. The plan's purpose is to identify means to reduce the loss of life and property, economic disruptions and the cost of recovery for Capitol Region communities resulting from the various natural hazards we are likely to face here. Under this grant, we will evaluate and revise the natural hazards risk assessments and vulnerabilities, critical facilities, and strategies and assets to deal with hazards which were identified in our 2008 plan. Connecticut's first-hand experiences with natural disasters in 2011 will certainly factor into our evaluations. In photo above: Flooding in Farmington from Irene (CTNow.com). During the update process, CRCOG will conduct a minimum of eight public meetings/workshops in various locations in the region. We will work with municipal planners, engineers, public safety professionals and other officials, in addition to interested business people, citizens and other private stakeholders. We will assist each participating municipality in updating action plans that identify and prioritize activities aimed at achieving long-term hazard reduction goals. Each mitigation action plan will include an implementation timeframe and potential funding source. We will also coordinate with other existing emergency planning efforts including the Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee (CREPC). In photo above residence collapses from weight of snow (WTNH.com). FEMA will provide \$300,000 for the project and CRCOG and our 30 member communities will provide a \$100,000 match, primarily as in-kind efforts. The 22 month project is expected to begin this December. The plan update, once approved by DEEP and FEMA and adopted by the municipalities, will enable participating municipalities to apply for FEMA hazard mitigation project grants.



Putnam Bridge on Route 3 to Get Walkway



The Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) announced that a six foot wide pedestrian walkway will be added to the Putnam Bridge, which carries Route 3 over the Connecticut River between Glastonbury and Wethersfield. The walkway will cost approximately \$5 million and will be added to a \$26 million DOT bridge rehabilitation project expected to start late next year and be completed in 2014. CRCOG is working in a partnership with Wethersfield, Glastonbury, East Hartford, and Goodwin College officials to obtain funding for the advancement of a feasibility study for Multi-Use Path connections from the bridge to local roads on each side of the river. The

evaluation of connections to a proposed trail network being developed by Goodwin College along the

east side of the river will likely also be included within the study scope. The resulting facility will provide an additional Connecticut River pedestrian crossing south of Hartford. Currently, within the 13 miles between Hartford and Middletown, pedestrians and cyclists cross the river on the seasonal South Glastonbury-Rocky Hill Ferry.

Towns Awarded Transit Oriented Development Grants

On October 13, Governor Malloy announced the award of \$5 million to 11 communities for transit oriented development (TOD) projects. The funding was designated in the state bond bill that was passed in the special session held in June of 2007. The funds will be administered by the CTDOT, and OPM worked with the DOT to select the projects. Three CRCOG municipalities were awarded funding: Windsor Locks (\$250,000), Windsor (\$250,000), and Hartford (\$730,000.) In addition, the City of New Britain received funding for TOD related to the New Britain Hartford Busway (\$750,000.) TOD is a simple concept – create development at transit stops and stations that can take advantage of the improved mobility provided by transit investments. Generally TOD has a mix of uses at transit supportive densities, with special attention paid to the walkability and bikeability of the station areas. TOD does not just happen, it requires careful planning and coordination and the funded communities are now able to move their TOD dreams closer to reality.

Small Grants Help Improve River Quality and Access



CRCOG recently funded three local projects aimed at improving the environmental quality of and public access to the Connecticut River. Last spring, the Connecticut River Bi-state Partnership in Massachusetts and Connecticut awarded \$49,580 in ten small grants for Connecticut River improvements. The Bi-state Partnership is comprised of Regional Planning Agencies (RPAs) in Massachusetts and Connecticut including the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission in Springfield, Massachusetts, the Franklin Regional Council of Governments in Greenfield, the Capitol Region Council of Governments in Hartford, CT, and the Connecticut River

Estuary Regional Planning Agency in Old Saybrook, CT. The grants were made possible by a larger grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission in Springfield, Massachusetts. In photo above summer campers kayaking on the Hockanum River in East Hartford



Small grants were offered to schools, non-profits, and municipalities to address sources of water quality impairment, enhance the overall environmental quality of the Connecticut River, and to help bring people back to the river by promoting and improving recreational access at the river. In the Capitol Region, grants totaling \$13,100 were awarded for projects involving boat launch improvements, the purchase of kayaks for increasing river recreation opportunities, and restoration of native vegetation to the floodplain of the river. Using their \$4000 grant, the Town of East Hartford purchased 14 kayaks, 14 paddles and 29 life vests from Cabela's in June. The equipment was initially used in the town's summer recreational camps, providing teens with new opportunities to enjoy the Hockanum River, a tributary to the Connecticut River. East Hartford is also working with the local school system to develop a

river educational program.

The Town of Enfield used their grant of nearly \$3900.00 to purchase and install a prefabricated educational kiosk at the Barnes Boat Launch. In photo above Enfield's Barnes boat launch kiosk. The grant also allowed the Town to purchase materials for display in the kiosk including fishing guide books, recreational guidebooks, and install two heavy gauge aluminum directional signs for the boat launch.



To eliminate invasive Japanese knotweed without using herbicides, students from Goodwin College's Environmental Studies program manually removed an extensive stand of invasive Japanese knotweed from the floodplain of the Connecticut River this summer. In photo at left, stand of invasive Japanese Knotweed before removal. Using their nearly \$5200.00 grant, Goodwin College purchased a variety of trees and shade tolerant ground species to plant in the demonstration area and erect an informational sign. The trees selected are intended to provide a canopy

which will discourage future growth of Japanese knotweed. About one-third of the plants were put in the ground on October 8, 2011. The next planting dates, weather permitting, are 10/15, 10/22, and 10/29/2011.

Medical Reserve Corps Statewide Event



The Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon was held on Friday, September 23, 2011 at Water's Edge in Westbrook. Rear Admiral, Assistant Surgeon General, Michael Milner gave welcoming remarks and thanked the volunteers who have been contributing to the Corps' mission in Connecticut since 2002. Admiral Milner encouraged members in attendance to continue to serve their local communities in times of need and throughout the year. Jennifer Frenette, Region 1 Coordinator thanked volunteers as did Mary Duley, the

MRC statewide coordinator, who also presented volunteers with an appreciation gift. The Connecticut Medical Reserve Corps is part of a national framework, which is coordinated by the Department of Homeland Security, and implemented through the Citizen Corps. The Capitol Region Council of Governments has been the housing organization for the CR-MRC since it began in 2003 Pictured with their awards are members of the Capitol Region Medical Reserve Corps.

Capitol Region Medical Reserve Corps Briefing



William Austin attended the October 5, 2011 CR-MRC meeting and discussed the relationship of CR-MRC to CRCOG, CREPC and EFS-8 (Health and Medical Services). He emphasized the role of medical volunteers and the history of MRC in the Capitol Region. Also at the meeting, Manchester Police Chief Marc Montminy shown in photo at left gave a presentation on the Hartford Distributor's incident which highlighted first responders, awareness of surroundings, behavioral health issues, reunification, active shooter response, MCI and medical volunteer support. A lengthy discussion and answer period followed the Chief's presentation

Upcoming Meeting Dates

Transportation Committee – November 7, 2011, Noon, CRRA

Public Safety Council – November 8, 2011, Noon, South Church

Municipal Services – November 15, 2011, Noon, CRCOG

CRCOG Policy Board – **rescheduled** - November 16, 2011, Noon, CRRA

Bike/Pedestrian Committee – December 13, 2011, Noon, Riverfront Boathouse

Capitol Region Jobs Access Task Force – November 17, 2011, 9:30 a.m., CRCOG

CREPC – November 17, 2011, 9:30 a.m., South Church

Regional Planning Commission – November 17, 2011, 7:00 p.m., West Hartford Town Hall

Executive Committee – January 11, 2012, Noon, CRCOG

CRCOG News is published six or more times per year by of the Capitol Region Council of Governments (www.crcog.org). The October 2011 issue is Volume 43 Number 5. 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, Mayor Pedro E. Segarra, Hartford, Vice Chair, 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. Capitol Region Council of Governments, 241 Main Street, 4th Floor, Hartford, CT 06106. 860 522 2217.