CRCOG Awarded $2 Million in Regional Performance Incentive Grants

The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) has been awarded over $2 million in grants from the state for three projects focused on improving service delivery by local governments in the Capitol Region. The three awarded projects are: Public Services Back Office Study, Regional Geographic Information System (GIS) and CAPTAIN 4G.

The Public Services Back Office Study will examine opportunities to create efficiencies in local government operations in the 30 town Capitol Region. It will explore both opportunities among town and Board of Education back office functions and opportunities for regional approaches that maximize service delivery to citizens. A priority list of service sharing projects for future action will be developed.

The largest grant, Regional GIS for $1.4 million, is part of an overall investment of over $7 million by the state to strengthen GIS capabilities. CRCOG’s project will build on the 2009 Regional Orthophotography obtained by CRCOG by upgrading the web-based GIS platform and updating the regional parcel database. Additionally, topographic and planimetric data will be developed. All of these data products and services will enhance our member municipalities’ public safety efforts, infrastructure planning, economic development, asset management and other programs.

The CAPTAIN 4G project will provide $400,000 of enhancements to the current mobile data communications system, now in its 11th year. This upgrade will enable police, fire and EMS professionals to access CAPTAIN through their 4G mobile devices. The project will also migrate existing server-based data to the cloud, lowering operational costs and increasing user accessibility. Please contact Jennifer March-Wackers with any questions (jwackers@crcog.org).

Save the Date: CRPC Annual Meeting October 30

The Capitol Region Purchasing Council will meet on October 30, 2012 at West Hartford Town Hall for its Annual Membership Meeting. The main topic of the meeting will be “Spend Analysis,” what it is and why it’s important. Also on the agenda is an update from the CT Department of Administrative Services’ Director of Procurement on their recent consolidation. Some important changes are being considered to the schedule of annual bids, and a new Executive Committee will be elected so please send a representative to consider these changes and vote. Registration materials are forthcoming, please contact Maureen Barton (mbarton@crcog.org) with any questions.
CRCOG to Host Public Hearing on Draft State Plan of Conservation and Development

The State Office of Policy and Management (OPM), in cooperation with Capitol Region Council of Governments, will hold a public hearing on the revised *2013-2018 Conservation and Development Policies: A Plan for Connecticut (Draft Plan)*, which was published on April 30, 2012. The public hearing will take place at 7:00 p.m. on September 24, 2012 at the Windsor Town Hall Council Chambers, 275 Broad Street, Windsor, CT. A link to the Draft Plan, along with a listing of all regional public hearing dates, times and locations, can be found on OPM’s website: [http://www.ct.gov/opm/cdplan](http://www.ct.gov/opm/cdplan). The State Conservation and Development Plan (State C&D Plan) serves as the official policy of the Executive Branch in matters pertaining to land and water resource conservation and development. State agencies are required to determine the consistency of their proposed actions with the State Conservation and Development Plan whenever they undertake certain actions requiring state expenditures in excess of $200,000.00. State statutes also require OPM to review each Bond Commission agenda and issue an advisory statement on the extent to which the items on the agenda are consistent with the State Conservation and Development Plan.

All interested persons are invited to express their views on the Draft Plan, either verbally or in writing, at any of the public hearings. In addition, written comments on the Draft Plan will be accepted at any time up to the close of business (5:00 PM) on October 5, 2012. Written comments may be mailed, faxed, or e-mailed to Daniel Morley, Office of Policy and Management, 450 Capitol Avenue, MS#54ORG, Hartford, CT 06106-1379; Fax: 860-418-6486; Daniel.Morley@ct.gov. All public comments received shall be considered part of the public record, and OPM will publish a formal response to such comments on its website approximately one month after the close of the public comment period.

Knowledge Corridor Consortium Hosts Fair Housing and Equity Discussion

The Sustainable Knowledge Corridor Consortium met on September 5th in Springfield, MA to discuss preparation of a bi-state fair housing and equity assessment (FHEA), a required element of the HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant activities being led by CRCOG and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC). Featured speakers included Barbara Fields, New England Region 1 Administrator, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; Gregory Bialecki, MA Secretary of Housing and Economic Development; Deborah Goddard, General Counsel, MA Department of Housing and Community Development; and Erin Boggs, Deputy Director, CT Fair Housing Center (from left to right in the photo above). The purpose of the FHEA is to help paint a full
picture of regional equity and access to opportunity. The report will analyze patterns of segregation and concentrations of poverty in the bi-state region, and consider how these patterns impact individuals’ access to opportunity. It will also include recommendations on actions which could be taken to expand opportunity for all with regard to a range of factors including education, employment, transportation and housing.

**Region’s Two Pilot Programs for Citizen Preparedness**

Citizen preparedness in our communities will be enhanced as we begin two new programs designed to make direct contact with citizens. Both programs draw on the information in our web site www.GetReadyCapitolRegion.org with the added benefit of having it explained and/or demonstrated by competent volunteers. The first program uses volunteers from East Hartford CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) to go into neighborhoods to discuss and demonstrate personal preparedness and how to support neighbors via the NET (Neighborhood Emergency Team) program. CERT members will benefit from enhanced indoctrination on the www.GetReadyCapitolRegion.org site and the NET program. This will be followed by instruction on giving effective presentations. Team members will then be provided with resources to support their presentations and go into communities to help them train to be more resilient. Program development is well underway and many members of CERT are anxious to get started.

The next program supports the Bristol Commission for Persons with Disabilities reaching out to citizens with disabilities to help them become better prepared for disasters. This program will also draw on the resources on the www.GetReadyCapitolRegion.org site, but instead of CERT volunteers it uses volunteers from the Region’s Special Needs Training unit headed up by Stephen Thal. This group has been working hard for the last several years to train first responders how to better deal with disabled citizens. Their training efforts have been well received and widely recognized across the State and into Massachusetts. Their expertise will now be used to directly support the functional needs population. The first event for this program will occur on September 22 at Bristol’s Mum Festival.

Both efforts are supported by CRCOG staff and consultant George Haddow who helped design the GetReady program. The program preparedness efforts have taken off significantly after CRCOG launched the program’s Facebook page and Twitter account. For excellent tips go to GetReadyCapitolRegion.org, visit our Facebook page and sign up for tweets. Preparedness pays off! For more information go to: www.GetReadyCapitolRegion.org.

**Mobile Command and Communications Vehicle for Capitol Region Emergency Services**

Through a cooperative effort between the Capitol Region and police departments in the Towns of Manchester and South Windsor a new Mobile Command and Communications vehicle for the “Capitol Region Emergency Services” has been delivered. The vehicle was acquired through the coordination of a Department of Justice COPS (Community Oriented Policing Services) grant from the Town of Manchester and Homeland Security Grant funds through the Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee.
Police and telecommunication staff, with input from the Region’s Mobile communications workgroup, designed the vehicle built in Ohio by Farber Specialty Vehicle. The vehicle replaces an older vehicle in South Windsor which was a refurbished box ambulance and greatly enhances mobile command and communications capabilities east of the CT River. The vehicle is one of the four local MCVs that have received Homeland Security funds through CRCOG to establish a more robust interoperable network for first responders working at the scene of an incident. The vehicle comes with a communication system that can tie radio and phone systems together. Other equipment includes multiple displays and workstations, along with a 50’ antennae mast and camera system. These vehicles are available throughout the Region for various local checkpoint operations. Regionally the vehicle will be known as CP 12 and will be housed in the Town of South Windsor operated by the South Windsor Police Department.

**Annual Bicycle/Pedestrian Count Underway**

Each September CRCOG marshals a force of volunteers for our annual bicycle and pedestrian count. This is part of the National Bicycle/Pedestrian Documentation project to allow analysts to establish correlations between various factors and bicycle and pedestrian activity. Currently, we have limited understanding of mode choice for biking and walking, and on trends in bicycle and pedestrian usage. Local data will add to the national project and also enable us to track local trends, informing our regional bike and pedestrian planning such as identifying locations with high pedestrian and bicycle crash rates. This year, more than 70 individuals are participating, with counts taking place throughout the region. We invite our member towns to make use of the results. Contact Sandy Fry 860-522-2217 x220 sfry@crcog.org, if you would like to learn more about the counting program and the available data.

**CRCOG Incident Management Team to Happy Camp CA**

The CRCOG USFA Type 3 Incident Management Team (CTIMT-3) was requested to supplement and train with the National Type 1 IMT managing the Fort Complex wild land fire in Siskiyou County, CA. CTIMT-3 traveled from Connecticut, on 2 Sept 2012 and returned on 8 Sept 2012. While deployed, the seven members of the CTIMT-3 had the opportunity to work with a National Type 1 Incident Management Team from CA. In the photo at left from (rear) left to right: Bill Perkins, Gary Allyn; (front) left to right Rich Clang, Gerald Macsata, Holly June Jacobs, Rich, Winn, and Ron Lee (California Incident Management Team 3). The type of duties performed included command and control positions, specifically Incident Commander, Safety Officer, Finance Section Chief, Documentation Unit Leader, Communications Technician, Resource Unit Leader, and Situation Unit Leader. The second photo below shows an aerial view of the 22,000 acre fire. The team members hit the ground running and were paired with the type 1 team mentors and assisted with their Incident Management duties. Prior to the arrival of CT IMT-3, the fire had consumed approximately 18,000 acres of heavy timberland and was 18% contained. In the seven
In the seven days that CTIMT-3 was deployed, the fire increased to approximately 22,000 acres. While there, the team was part of an approximately 1,000 person force that was fighting the fire. This force included 10 helicopters used to drop water and to transport personnel to remote areas, as the terrain ranged from 900 feet to 4,000 feet in elevation and not accessible by vehicles. The helicopters also conduct medical emergency evacuations as needed. By the time the team left, the fire was 61% contained. The remainder of the fire posed no immediate threat to inhabited areas. The training and experience obtained by the CTIMT-3 team will strengthen the capabilities of the team as a whole when called upon to assist in emergencies in our region and the state. This is the third such deployment that members of the CTIMT-3 have been deployed to out of state. In 2011 they were deployed twice to the wildfires in Texas.

Upcoming Meeting Dates

Transportation Committee – October 15, 2012, Noon, CRRA
Public Safety Committee – September 13, 2012, Noon, South Church
Municipal Services – September 18, 2012, Noon, CRCOG
CRCOG Policy Board – September 26, 2012, Noon, CRRA
Bike/Pedestrian Committee – December 11, 2012, Noon, TBD
Capitol Region Jobs Access Task Force – September 20, 2012, 9:30 a.m., CRCOG
CREPC – September 20, 2012, 9:30 a.m., South Church
Regional Planning Commission – September 27, 2012, 7:00 p.m., West Hartford Town Hall
CRCOG Executive Committee – October 3, 2012, Noon, CRCOG