### Capitol Region Council of Governments
241 Main St., Hartford, CT 06106
Transportation Working Group Meeting
Monday September 24th, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russ Arnold</td>
<td>Farmington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan Thiesse</td>
<td>Bloomfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billy Taylor</td>
<td>Enfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thom Deller</td>
<td>Hartford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Carlino</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Greenlaw</td>
<td>Newington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Sollmi</td>
<td>Rocky Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffrey Doolittle</td>
<td>South Windsor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rick Baldwin</td>
<td>CCEJ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Staff**
- Jennifer Carrier
- Rob Aloise

---

1. **Roll Call** – Jennifer Carrier called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

2. **Public Forum** – No one from the public chose to speak.

3. **Discussion of ConnDOT’s Draft Proposal for a Local Transportation Capitol Program**
   
   A. Ideas to making State Funds more secure
      - Each of the current bonded funding sources (Local Bridge Program, STEAP, etc.) are at the mercy of the legislature
      - Could a portion of the gas tax be utilized to fund this program?
      - Potentially, CRCOG could retain federal funding, transferring it to ConnDOT annually at the time state funding has been obtained
      - There is a need for an agreement to ensure that if state funding is diminished, STPU funds return to the regions
      - If we were to transfer or reclaim STPU funding (as in prior two bullets), there would be a need to synchronize bond approval with the Federal Fiscal Year

   B. How could changes benefit municipalities
      - The whole purpose of the policy change is to streamline. If Federal funds are not involved, the process could be made much simpler with projects could be delivered quicker and cheaper (less inflation risk, less red tape and less stringent standards)
      - ConnDOT’s review process, especially hydraulics unit reviews result in costly changes
      - When municipal jobs are prepared, municipal standards are generally used – pavement is what we can obtain cost effectively from the plant
      - The potential benefits to municipalities depend on what design standards need to be followed and how extensive the review processes are.

---

`DRAFT until Endorsed by the Committee`
C. Good services the STP-U program currently offers
   - MSAT team results are not speedy
   - Some have found MSAT team helpful as a resource
   - ConnDOT staff assistance is very helpful if federal regulations (or similar) need to be followed. If not, towns would rather use in-house staff or hire a consultant

D. How can the program help smaller communities
   - If the program is implemented, a potential help to all communities would be if CRCOG could secure on-call specialty services (design review, right-of-way, inspection, accounting, etc.) for use by any town

Discussion of DOT proposal 1 – The new source of funds would be state bonds and any proposed capital improvement will require a 20 year service life. It would not be a paving program.
   - Funds need to be stable and flexible. Pavement Rehabilitation, Bike/Ped projects, and Planning projects should be allowed (at least in same percentages as today)
   - The funding stability and the need to keep Pavement Rehab and Bike/Ped are each large issues. They warrant being split when presented/discussed.
   - The 20 year design criteria may be necessary. There may be regulations that mandate the capital improvement needs to last as long as the bond period, which typically is 20 years for State bonds

Discussion of DOT proposal 2 – The funding distribution would reflect the current STP-Urban population driven process by MPO and the annual budget request would coincide with the anticipated STP-Urban federal funding levels for that year.
   - CRCOG needs to maintain at least the same involvement in the management of funds as they currently do.
   - Some agreement that municipal projects generally do not conflict with DOT design manual criteria, however specs are not typically followed. Sometimes Municipal and DOT design criteria does conflict, such as with rates and breaks in cross-slopes. A third party could be retained to conduct a review of projects to maintain minimum standards within the program.
   - Municipalities should be allowed to track time for reimbursement (or use as the local match).

Discussion of DOT proposal 3 – Eligibility for funds would require a minimum roadway classification of a collector. Bridge improvements would be eligible on any public road.
   - Currently there is an exception for off-road Bike/Ped projects. It is desired that the exception be maintained as Bike/Ped projects are important and the STP-Enhancement program is less secure under MAP-21.
   - There is increasing pressure in communities to provide Bike/Ped improvements and they should still be eligible under this program.

Discussion of DOT proposal 4 – Project funding split would be 90% State 10% Local.
   - Projects on state roadways should be 100% state funded.
   - State and Local roads will likely need to follow different processes.
• CRCOG should map the envisioned processes for State and Local roads. A process with more DOT involvement for State roads will likely put DOT’s mind at ease.

Discussion of DOT proposal 5 – The MPO’s would still solicit, rank and submit projects, to the Department, in a fiscally constrained abbreviated process following municipal estimating practices.

• It is desired that the DOT Project Concept Unit only be involved with State Roads

Discussion of DOT proposal 6 – Preliminary Engineering (PE), Rights of Way (ROW), Construction and construction inspection activities would be eligible costs. PE and ROW will be funded upfront by the municipalities.

• It would be good if DOT services were available by municipality choice, but not mandated, perhaps on a pay as needed basis
• If DOT services are used, it is difficult to cost out project. Would rather have 3rd party consultants perform these services.
• May be best if these services are only used on State Roads, municipalities could hire their own consultants for Local Roads if they cannot do the work in-house (or CRCOG retain on-calls for this use)

Discussion of DOT proposal 7 – It is anticipated that there would be an initial application process as mentioned above, a review by the Department for eligibility and 20 year service life, followed by a letter of commitment to move forward with project design.

• It would be best if this Department review was a cursory one

Discussion of DOT proposal 8 – Projects will comply with the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA). Most town sponsored projects will meet CEPA by way of the Department of Transportation’s Environmental Classification Document at the following link: http://www.ct.gov/opm/cwp/view.asp?a=2990&q=383192

• Will ConnDOT require any documentation of this compliance?

Discussion of DOT proposal 9 – Upon completion of design activities, when the municipality has a complete Plans Specifications and Estimate (PS&E) package, application will again be made to the Department and MPO with actual PE and ROW costs along with a final construction estimate. At that time, a grant type award will be made to the municipality including 10% for construction contingencies.

• It is unclear exactly how the Town is reimbursed. The statement indicates “Grant Type award”, however there is concern if actual payment is postponed and municipalities need to outlay large costs.
• CRCOG was offered the assistance of Manchester financial personnel to inform CRCOG of different Grant types and how they operate
• Clarification of payment schedules and eligibility needs to be laid out
• Determination of agency responsibilities and roles for managing funds, accounting for funds, and where the funds would flow through should be clarified
Discussion of DOT proposal 10 – Projects will be let through the respective municipalities advertising and low bid process

- Would be best if construction inspection requirements were limited to a Municipal letter to DOT certifying that certain standards were adhered to. Current Construction Inspection requirements could be followed on State Roads if necessary.

Discussion of DOT proposal 11 – The municipality must obtain an audit of the total cost of the project by a Certified Public Accountant and forward the audit to the Department upon completion of construction.

- Audits are not inexpensive
- Audit costs should be included in the estimated project costs for reimbursement

Discussion of DOT proposal 12 – Failure to provide an audit is an event of default under the project agreement, and may result in the Department requesting the return of the grant, and the municipality becoming ineligible for future financial assistance

- Will this only affect the regional program, or only municipality that failed to provide an audit?
- This should not be structured to impact the overall region’s program.

Discussion of DOT proposal 13 – The STIP/TIP approval process could not be used by an MPO to leverage access to additional federal STP-Urban funds to be used on town-owned roadways. Penalty would be withholding of State funds in the new Local Transportation Capital Program

- Clarification should be made as to prevent arbitrary punishment of a region based on legitimate TIP/STIP disagreement
- It appears that ConnDOT is only trying to protect the monies they will already have programmed.
- There needs to be protections for our programmed monies also.

Action Items

CRCOG staff will devise a potential new program process that incorporates this meeting’s findings. CRCOG will likely hold a second Working Group meeting for discussion the new process. It is anticipated that this will be held prior to the next Transportation Committee meeting (Oct. 15). Final region comments are due to ConnDOT by Oct. 17.

4. Adjourn