

## **CRCOG Service Sharing Initiative Regional Performance Incentive Grant Projects**

The Capitol Region Council of Governments was awarded \$5.2 million in grant funds from the State of Connecticut in 2008 to pursue 10 service sharing projects. Those grants have been leveraged to start sharing in all 29 CRCOG towns and several towns outside of the CRCOG region. The grants range over a broad array of local government services. Below is a summary of each project and their latest activities.

### **Regional Animal Control**

**Grant amount: \$515,000**

**Estimated savings: ~\$2.5 million** (based on prices of buying land and building individual facilities in four separate towns)

This grant provides funding for the purchase of land on which the Connecticut Humane Society shall construct a new Regional Animal Control Facility shared by the towns of East Hartford, Hartford, Manchester and South Windsor.

Most recently a parcel has been selected and a price agreed to with the land owner. The towns will be meeting with the Connecticut Humane Society shortly.

### **Digital Health Departments**

**Grant amount: \$355,476**

**Estimated savings: ~\$400,000 for software development and hardware purchase** (versus independent development and purchases)

The grant provides funding to purchase a web-based system for local and regional health departments to add capacity for data entry in the field and to store and track all inspections, permits, run queries, reports and conduct data analysis. The grant provides access to 12 towns through 5 health departments. It is possible to expand this software to other towns after the implementation period.

An RFP has been conducted and a finalist selected. The final contract is currently under review. CRCOG is partnering with the Connecticut Association of Directors of Public Health on this project and will provide leadership on helping expand the software to other town and regional departments.

### **IT Application Sharing and Development**

**Grant amount: \$515,000**

**Estimated savings: ~\$1 million** (~\$33,000 per town with pilot projects - depending on types of software pursued, plus much more in long-term savings)

This grant provides funding for the Capitol Region Council of Governments to set up an infrastructure through which towns can cooperate in IT software purchasing and development. Several pilot projects will also be conducted with the grant. There are 31 towns participating in this project.

Phase 1 Needs Assessment is complete and the group is working to establish an online web portal to share home-grown software and information. There is also an RFP under development for shared permit tracking software.

## **CRCOG Service Sharing Initiative Regional Performance Incentive Grant Projects**

### **GIS OrthoFlight and Mapping Data**

**Grant amount: \$357,000**

**Estimated savings: ~\$1.3 million** (if towns contracted for individual flights)

This grant provides funding for a region-wide orthoflight at 1"=100' scale. The data will become the property of CRCOG and its member towns (plus the Town of Plainville).

A contract has been finalized and the flight is scheduled. A higher quality of data was obtained than was expected with available grant funding. Towns also have "buy-up" options to enhance the data available if they so choose.

### **Web-based GIS Enhancement**

**Grant amount: \$25,000**

**Estimated savings: ~\$125,000** (if participating towns paid for enhancements individually)

This grant provides funding to add functionality to the existing CRCOG web-based GIS system used by its members.

Enhancement options are being evaluated and changes are expected to be implemented by May 2009.

### **Farmington Valley Trail Maintenance**

**Grant amount: \$216,300**

**Estimated savings: ~\$720,000** (if participating towns bought equipment individually)

This grant provides funding for equipment purchase and development of an agreement to share that equipment with the 8 towns that the Farmington Valley Greenway Trail runs through.

All but two of the eight towns have gained approval for the sharing MOU. It is anticipated that all approvals will be complete by March 2009 and bids will go out for equipment at that time.

### **Regional EOC**

**Grant amount: \$515,000**

**Estimated savings: ~\$1.9 million** (if each town built its own EOC)

This grant provides funding for the renovation of an existing area in the Manchester Public Works building to be a Regional Emergency Operations Center.

An engineer has been selected and design is complete. An RFP for construction services will be released in March 2009.

## **CRCOG Service Sharing Initiative Regional Performance Incentive Grant Projects**

### **Regional Training Center**

**Grant amount: \$1,051,101**

**Estimated savings: ~\$50,000 per town per year** (versus rental fees of other facilities)

This grant provides funding for the establishment of a Regional Police Training Facility in Rocky Hill, CT. Twenty-seven towns are participating in this project, six of which are non-CRCOG towns.

A site has been identified in Rocky Hill and an RFP for design/build is under review. It is expected that the RFP will be released in March 2009.

### **Law Enforcement Data Sharing**

**Grant amount: \$1,292,860**

**Estimated savings: ~ \$4.3 million** (for total individual town software development and maintenance costs)

This grant provides funding for law officers to share data regarding arrests, vehicle status and other information among departments. Thirty-one towns are participating in this project.

A vendor has been identified and has commenced software development. Tests of the system are underway.

### **Regional Traffic Team**

**Grant amount: \$353,290**

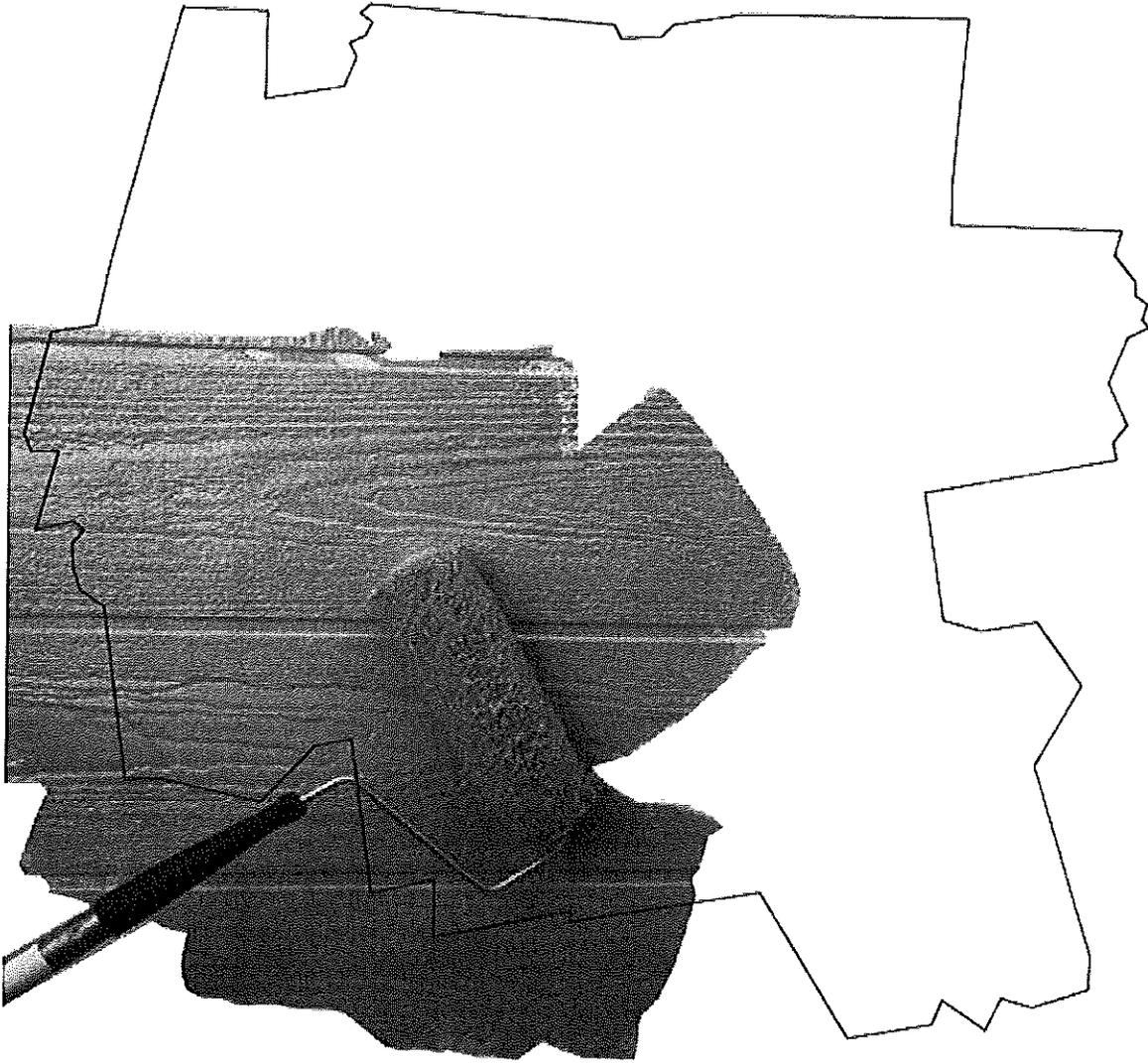
**Estimated savings: ~\$980,000** (if each town developed this function and bought equipment independently)

This grant provides funding for the creation of three mobile units for investigation of traffic incidents. This expands the ability of law enforcement to respond to these incidents without duplicating efforts across towns.

Purchases are being made for some equipment (crash zone reporting software, trailers). Training classes have been scheduled.



# 2007 - 2008 Annual Report



**Greening the Region**  
Capitol Region Council of Governments  
*Serving Connecticut's Capitol Region*  
[www.crcog.org](http://www.crcog.org)

## **CRCOG HIGHLIGHTS 2007-2008**

### **Prepared applications and implemented grant funding for regional efforts and member towns**

Enhanced service sharing mission with receipt of **\$5,196,027** in grants from OPM  
Obligated **over \$8 million** in federal urban funds for road projects  
Awarded **\$440,000** for 11 paratransit vans through the Section 5310 program  
Awarded **\$900,000** for Elderly and Disabled Demand Responsive Transportation  
Obligated **over \$2.2 million** to provide jobs access transportation across the region  
Awarded **\$2.4 million** in FY 2006 and 2007 federal homeland security grants  
Completed work under the first EPA Brownfields Petroleum Assessment Grant (**\$200,000 grant**)  
Completed final draft of FEMA Pre-Disaster Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (**\$322,000 grant**)

### **Provided direct technical assistance, training, supplies, and equipment to towns**

Completed CRCOG assistance on Bolton Route 44 Land Use study  
Completed requirements of an Agriculture Viability Grant  
Responded to ongoing requests for information and assistance on livable community issues  
Provided technical assistance to towns to solve traffic and transportation planning issues  
Provided assistance to towns developing Safe Routes to School plans  
Assisted the Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice  
Initiated a partnership to develop a public works inter-town service cooperation pilot program  
Completed several Regional Emergency Disaster (RED) Plan table top exercises  
Completed a 6-day All Hazards Incident Management Team Training for first responders  
Conducted 5 HAZMAT IQ courses for the region's fire departments  
Continue to train all first responders in the National Incident Management System (NIMS)  
Supplied towns with new and upgraded supplies and technology to support public safety

### **Assisted in planning and implementation efforts to support responsible long-term development**

Implementing the regional transit strategy, including transit-oriented development  
Drafting a new bicycle and pedestrian plan  
Conducting the Route 195 corridor study in Tolland  
Conducting the Route 305 corridor study  
Conducting a study of how to improve transit to employment centers in Windsor and Bloomfield  
Conducting a capital improvement planning project for historic Union Station in Hartford  
Establishing an agreement with Journey Home to address long-term homelessness  
Working on the redevelopment of brownfield sites so that the property can be reused  
Expanding affordable housing opportunities  
Working to preserve natural resources, including agricultural lands and watersheds  
Completing Phase I of the Integrated Design Community Design Resource Project

### **Provided leadership and direction in implementing a long-range vision for the region**

Acted as an advocate for the region and its towns in the legislature on key priorities  
Supported the Capitol Region COMPASS initiative  
Supported the Citizens Network on local education finance reform  
Participated in efforts related to strategic planning and performance measurement  
Analyzed and educated stakeholders on demographic changes and other regional trends

## Welcome

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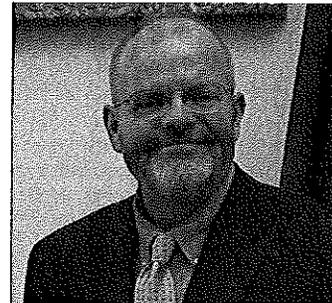
### **The Greening of Connecticut - A Message from Melody A. Currey, Chair of the CRCOG Policy Board, Mayor of East Hartford CT**

Heightened concern about our environment poses both a challenge and an opportunity to CRCOG member towns. CRCOG has always been a strong advocate for transportation and land use solutions that protect the wonderful natural resources that we enjoy in our

region. Increased emphasis on environmental issues will give further traction to our region's efforts to promote smart growth, transit-oriented development, creation of greenways, and opportunities to bike, walk or use public transportation. In addition, through the CRCOG Foundation we are identifying new opportunities to help our towns better meet their goals of environmental stewardship and protection of our natural assets.

### **Doing More for Our Members - Lyle Wray, CRCOG Executive Director**

CRCOG's funding for internal operations remains pretty stable, but we find ourselves needing to do more as the number of projects on our plate grows. CRCOG strives to be more effective and efficient in our internal operations so that we can better serve our member towns. Last year, we completed a new classification, compensation, and job description project, updating an effort last undertaken in 1999.



We have a number of new initiatives under way to help streamline our processes for managing grants and contracts, processing expenses, and paying vendors. We also significantly re-vamped our budget document in accordance with guidelines from the Government Financial Officer's Association. Most significantly, when we renewed our lease on office space we asked our landlord to undertake major renovations, which has given us more space for both staff and for meetings. The renovations did require an investment by CRCOG in some new furniture and a modern phone system, but these investments will pay off by allowing us to work more effectively.

This year we welcomed the following new staff to CRCOG: Pramod Pandey, Lia Huang, and Bill Hogan.

**In Memoriam.** This year witnessed a very sad goodbye with the death of Linda Osten last December. While Linda had moved on from her long tenure at CRCOG, she continued her important work advocating for the Hartford region. She is much missed.

## Environmental Initiatives in the CRCOG Region

CRCOG member towns have instated, to varying degrees, green policies and programs in an effort to improve operating efficiencies, control rising energy costs, promote healthier work environments, mitigate climate change and commit to sustainable development. Many of them have taken some basic, critical steps, towards improving operating efficiencies and reducing their carbon footprint. These include investments in energy management systems, energy efficient lighting, purchasing of recycled products, and providing recycling services. In addition, the following are some examples of specific green initiatives by our member towns:

- About two-thirds of CRCOG's members have joined the SmartPower 20% by 2010 Clean Energy Campaign. This initiative challenges municipal governments, businesses and institutions to obtain 20% of their electricity supply from clean, renewable energy sources by the year 2010.
- The Town of Glastonbury has made energy conservation an organizational/management priority, and has earmarked \$250,000 for FY 09 to support energy efficiency and alternate energy projects. The Town has also realized over \$880,000 in rebates since 2000 via its participation in various CL&P programs, and now enjoys \$130,000 in annual savings based on efficiency measures.
- West Hartford's approach has included: engaging consultant services to verify utility bill charges, estimate energy costs, review energy procurement options and reduce energy consumption; participating in the EPA's New England Community Energy Challenge; working in conjunction with an active Clean Energy Taskforce on benchmarking activities; and drafting an Environmentally-Preferable Purchasing (EPP) Policy. The Town also plans to issue an RFP targeting renewable energy generation.
- In 2004, the Town of Windsor joined Cities for Climate Protection (CCP), the flagship program of ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability.
- The mayors of Bloomfield, Hartford and West Hartford have committed to reduce emissions in their cities by seven percent below 1990 levels by the year 2012 as signatories to the U.S. Conference of Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement.
- South Windsor High School is now in its sixth year of running fuel cell technologies. This allows the town to reduce its carbon footprint and its reliance both on the power grid and on oil; it powers its emergency shelter operations; and provides a unique learning tool.
- In 2007, Manchester executed an agreement with Community Energy to provide 1,275 MWh of wind-generated energy, and funds have been included in the FY 09 budget to purchase additional wind energy credits.
- The Town of Wethersfield held a "Green Summit" in March to recognize existing environmentally-friendly initiatives in town and to identify opportunities to make Wethersfield a more "green" community. The Town is now in the process of hiring an energy consultant to comply with a high priority Summit-generated recommendation.
- After hosting its own Green Summit this spring, Simsbury launched Gifford's Green Conversations, a forum series focusing on key environmental issues. Covered topics to date have included recycling as well as community forestry and historic streetscapes. The Town also recently called for five residents to serve on its new clean energy task force, which will be charged with overseeing Simsbury's participation in the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund's Community Innovations Grant Program.

# Transportation

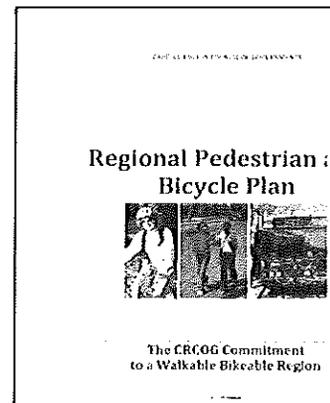
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## Introduction

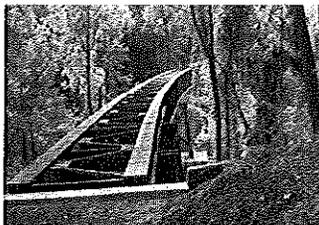
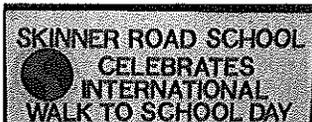
Improving our transportation infrastructure, and in particular making bus, rail, biking, and walking real alternatives to auto travel for those who live and work in the region are a critical component of environmental stewardship and improving quality of life.

## Greening the Region: Bicycling and Walking as Real Transportation Options

With the rapid increase in gas prices, many citizens of the region searched for transportation options that would enable them to leave their cars at home. Add to this concerns about the public health implications of decreased physical activity and the conditions were right for giving walking and bicycling a closer look, especially for trips of five miles or less. CRCOG has been working steadily over a decade to assist our region's towns in designing and building pedestrian and bicycle facilities. In the past year, we undertook a new effort to rewrite our bicycle and pedestrian plans creating an actionable plan that will transform the Region into the kind of place where people can easily choose to walk and bicycle for everyday transportation. In April 2008, the Policy Board formally adopted the **"Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan, the CRCOG Commitment to a Walkable/Bikeable Region."** Implementation of the plan began immediately and is ongoing.



In 2008 CRCOG began a new initiative to get more children walking and bicycling to school with our **Safe Routes to Schools** 2 part workshop series. The Safe Routes program is simple: step 1, learn why children are not bicycling and walking to school; step 2, develop programs to eliminate the barriers to walking and bicycling. As part of our workshop series, schools are able to take advantage of consulting engineering services, available through CRCOG, to assess traffic safety in the school vicinity.



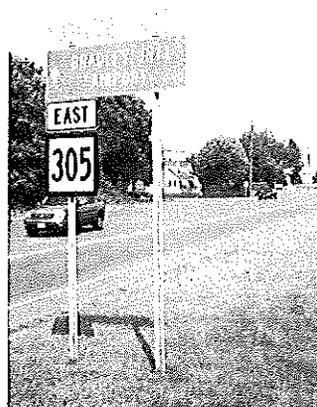
**Salmon Brook Bridge Construction** is underway: Progress on the Farmington Valley Greenway has been moving forward in fits and starts, but the end is in sight! Through the intervention of CRCOG, funding was located to enable the construction of the Salmon Brook Bridge in East Granby to move forward. This bridge, perched high above the Salmon Brook, will provide breathtaking views and fills a key gap in this popular bicycle path.

The **Northwest Corridor Study** is an important part of greening the region. The study is evaluating three distinct elements that might make transit a more convenient choice for more people. The three focus areas are: improving transit service to the Day Hill/Griffin office area; examining Union Station in its role as the terminus of the New Britain busway (and future busways that will be built); and evaluating downtown transit circulation. The study is expected to be completed in late 2008.



**Improved Physical Connections** The STP-Urban Program continued to provide funding for roadway improvements and related infrastructure improvements throughout the region. Approximately \$8 million per year is allocated to the region and CRCOG ensures the monies are allocated and projects advance. CRCOG was successful this year programming all of the federal monies.

**Preserving the Tolland Green** The Route 195 corridor study includes the historic Town Green, which dates back to the 1700s. Route 195, Route 74, and several local roads converge on the Green creating traffic problems, detracting from the historic character, and making the area less suitable for pedestrians and community functions. The study is exploring options to ease traffic problems while maintaining the historic character, and making the Green a better place for pedestrians, families, and community activities. A public workshop was held to collect residents' ideas for improvements. We are also working with an advisory committee of town residents and officials to review and refine these ideas.



**Route 305 Corridor Study** The Route 305 corridor is an important east-west arterial roadway within the towns of Windsor and Bloomfield serving residential, commercial and industrial uses. The corridor study kicked off this year and the existing 2.5-mile corridor as well as the feasibility of extending the roadway westerly to Route 189 will be studied in detail. CRCOG, with consultant assistance, conducted an extensive public outreach effort, distributing mail-back surveys and using web-based survey tools to solicit comments from local residents and business owners. The project team also sought input from stakeholders during public meetings and continues to work with local advisory committees in each town.

#### **Collaboration with CCEJ Pays Dividends - Cleaner Air**

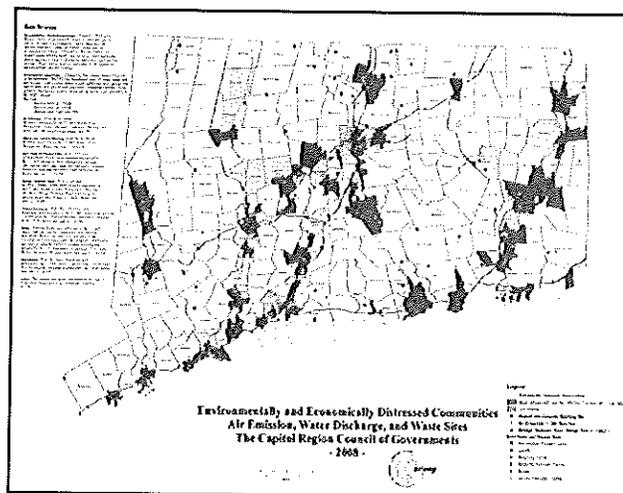
CRCOG's relationship with the Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice (CCEJ) began in 2001 when CRCOG was awarded an Environmental Justice Challenge Grant. Since then, CRCOG has undertaken several efforts to make its transportation-planning program more responsive to the needs of low-income and minority communities. Our partnership with CCEJ and its Hartford affiliate, the Hartford Environmental Justice

Network (HEJN), is significant since these groups are CRCOG's direct links to the Environmental Justice community.

A significant milestone in this partnership was the development of a proposal to retrofit CT Transit buses with diesel particulate filters. Diesel emissions can pose a health hazard in these urban neighborhoods where asthma rates are often higher than in suburban neighborhoods. In 2005, CRCOG submitted an application for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funds to retrofit CT Transit buses with diesel particulate filters. The project was approved and filters are now being installed on older buses, while new buses are being delivered with the filters already installed.

More recently, CRCOG provided CCEJ with technical support for House Bill 5145, (an Act Concerning Environmental Justice Communities and the storage of asbestos-containing material). CRCOG's GIS staff generated a set of maps which located environmentally and economically stressed communities using a complex set of variables. This visualization proved to be significant in the success of the presentations that CCEJ made on the proposed legislation.

The bill was signed into law in May 2008 by Governor Jodi Rell. This legislation is groundbreaking and sets the State of Connecticut on a path to assure that all communities are heard prior to building or expanding an environmental-affecting facility.



## Other Transportation Progress This Year

### FY 2008 Achievements:

- *\$8 Million for Current Town Projects.* Obligated \$8 million in federal STP Urban funds in FY2008 to start design, ROW, or construction of previously approved road projects.
- *Technical Assistance.* Provided technical assistance to towns to solve traffic problems, resolve project funding problems, or mediate with ConnDOT on road design issues.
- *Regional Performance Incentive Grant.* Began to establish partnerships with municipalities and others such as the Technology Transfer Center and Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security to develop a public works inter-town service cooperation pilot program.

### FY 2009 Goals:

- *STP Urban Program.* Continue to advance projects, obligate \$8 million appropriated for FY09, work with DOT & FHWA to streamline project development process and consider bid alternates as project costs continue to increase.
- *NW Corridor Transit Study.* Complete this transit study.
- *Route 195 Study.* Complete the Route 195 study in Tolland.
- *Route 305 Study.* Complete the Route 305 study in Bloomfield and Windsor.
- *Route 6 Study.* Conduct consultant selection process and prepare contracts.
- *I-84 Viaduct Study.* Complete consultant selection and substantially complete study.
- *Special Studies Projects.* Work with ConnDOT and interested municipalities to kick off special planning study projects.
- *Build Upon Public Safety / Transportation Relationship.* Assist Public Safety Department with Regional Performance Assistance Grant Administration and Public Works / Homeland Security joint initiatives.
- *Safety.* Continue to advance regional safety management principles and begin preparing the Capitol Region safety briefing.

# Planning and Community Development

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## Introduction

How can we continue to grow and thrive as a region, while minimizing harm to the natural environment? What strategies can our towns pursue to become “greener,” not only with regard to building design and energy use, but also development regulations and practices? These are just two of the questions that have guided the work of the Community Development department over the past year.

CRCOG's Community Development function covers the areas of community development planning and technical assistance, and municipal services. In the past year, CRCOG and its member municipalities have demonstrated their ongoing commitment to balancing conservation and development within the region, increasing multi-modal transportation opportunities, enhancing economic opportunities for all residents, and other tenets of livable communities and smart growth. In addition, our municipal services program, which includes the work of the Capitol Region Purchasing Council, has assisted member towns to improve governmental efficiency and save tax dollars through cooperative projects, shared services and other direct service initiatives. Following are some highlights of the last year.

## CRCOG Helps Support Brownfields Redevelopment

In FY 2008, the Capitol Region Council of Governments, in partnership with the MetroHartford Alliance, continued its MetroHartford Brownfields Assessment Program. This program helps municipalities conduct environmental assessments of sites suspected of contamination by petroleum products or other hazardous substances, in order to aid in their redevelopment. \$400,000 in EPA funds were added to the program this year, to bring total grant awards since the program's inception in 2004 to \$800,000. To date, the program has assisted 14 projects in nine communities.

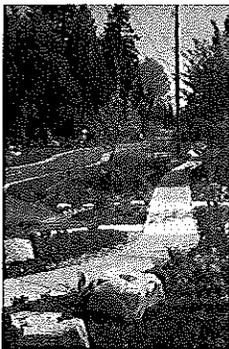


One of our most notable investments has been providing \$141,450 to help fund Phase I through Phase III environmental assessments of properties which are part of the new Goodwin College Riverfront campus in East Hartford. This campus sits on a former petroleum storage site. The project was chosen as an EPA Brownfields Success Story in early 2008. After removing the above ground petroleum storage tanks from the property in 2005, contaminated soil was removed from the property using natural bioremediation techniques. All parts of the property will continue to be cleaned up to the most stringent residential standards. Phase I of redevelopment began in 2006 and is expected to be finished in Fall 2008. The first completed building will house 39 classrooms, six science labs, computer labs, a student lounge, a café, a 700-seat auditorium, a library and media center, and community rooms. Goodwin College hosted a topping off ceremony to celebrate the structural completion of this building in November 2007.

The College has assembled more than 700 acres along Riverside Drive as part of its plan to create a riverfront park around its new campus. The park, accessible by Goodwin College and the general public, will include an additional 2 ½ miles of walking trails, which will connect with existing trails in the area, and several sports fields. The park will allow public access to three deep-water docks where a research vessel will dock allowing the college to support a river ecology curriculum. Goodwin College also plans to create research opportunities by using the area's wetlands and woods for environmental research and creating a river and estuarial study center.

### **Technical Assistance Helps Communities Build a Greener Future**

In FY 2007-2008, Community Development staff provided technical assistance on a number of topics that will help towns to grow in an environmentally responsible manner. Here is a sampling of our efforts:



*Low-Impact Stormwater Management.* On September 27, 2007, CRCOG, the Connecticut DEP, and the U.S. EPA co-sponsored a daylong conference entitled “Stormwater in the City: Managing Runoff, Improving Water Quality, Helping Neighborhoods.” This conference helped to educate and inform local decision-makers, planners, engineers, government officials and citizen advocates about managing stormwater in ways that can improve water quality and the urban environment. Urbanized areas exist within the watersheds of all our Region’s rivers, so this training had broad applicability to Capitol Region communities.

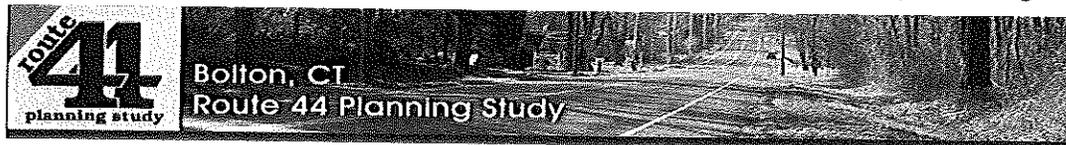
*Strengthening our Agricultural Base.* Many Capitol Region communities are working to maintain active farms—not just to preserve the rural landscape, but to keep viable agricultural operations as a part of the local economy. CRCOG assisted in this effort through working with farm business owners and municipal officials to identify opportunities to improve agricultural regulations and offer recommendations for achieving greater regulatory consistency across municipalities. The end result was a published report –“Regulating the Farm: Improving Agricultural Viability in the Capitol Region”. CRCOG and the participating towns received an award from the CT Chapter of the American Planning Association (CCAPA) for the Agricultural Viability project on November 30th. CCAPA acknowledged this project as an outstanding planning initiative in the Public Service category. Also, CRCOG served on the advisory committee that helped in developing “Planning for Agriculture: A Guide for Connecticut Municipalities,” a publication of the American Farmland Trust and the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities. This publication and its associated public workshops will further assist towns in preserving working farms.





*Bright Ideas on Community Design.* Through a grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, CRCOG is working with the University of Hartford Center for Integrated Design to assess what resources and strategies communities are using—and what they need and want—to help implement better design on a continuous basis. This includes design approaches to create more walkable/bikeable communities, open spaces that support a range

of community objectives, and energy-efficient buildings and neighborhoods. The purpose of this collaborative outreach project is two-fold: 1) to determine the level of understanding and knowledge of smart growth and livable communities practices in the greater Hartford area, and the resources currently available to these municipalities; and 2) to work towards a more comprehensive resource base and network that can be used to assist towns working towards smart growth and more livable communities. The Phase One Report, published in February 2008, summarizes the results of several community dialogue workshops and surveys. Phase Two will build on this information to list and evaluate a range of options for building livable community design capacity in the region.



*Rethinking Land Use.* The face of Route 44 in Bolton, a main road through town and a gateway to Hartford to the west and the University of Connecticut at Storrs to the east, may be changing. New sewer lines are planned, presenting the Town with opportunities for development and challenges as to how it will channel potential growth.

In 2007-2008, CRCOG along with the consulting firm of Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc. assisted the Town of Bolton in studying Route 44. A Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant provided through the CT Office of Policy and Management (OPM) funded this study. The study focused on existing land uses and the transportation system along Route 44 with an eye towards guiding future growth in a manner that preserves valued green space and community character, while discouraging automobile dependency and increased traffic congestion. The recommendations of this study are applicable to other communities that are seeking alternatives to traditional strip-commercial development along major thoroughfares.

*Connecting People to Nature.* The Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation & Development Council (RC&D) and its partners, including CRCOG, broke ground on the South Branch Trail in Hartford on May 9th. Using a DEP grant, the RC&D worked with the City, Hartford Areas Rally Together (HART), CRCOG, CT DEP, the Hartford Housing Authority, the Knox Parks Foundation, U.S. EPA, and the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to get this project started. Phase One of the multi-use trail will run along the east side of the South Branch of the Park River, from Flatbush Avenue south to Nilan Street. Phase Two will extend the trail south to Newfield Avenue. Additional phases will explore connections to trails in Pope Park to the North, and to the Trout Brook system in West Hartford. Neighborhood residents are excited to gain access to this open space area. The City will also construct a meadow walking trail connecting to Phase One of the Trail to enable users to gain better views of the River and wildlife in the area.

## **The Greening of Local Government: CRCOG Municipal Services**

Municipal Services spent a large amount of the first half of the 2007-08 fiscal year participating in the writing of 18 grant applications to the OPM Regional Performance Incentive Program. As is described in the Service Sharing section, CRCOG was awarded almost \$5.2 million for 10 projects as a result of these applications.

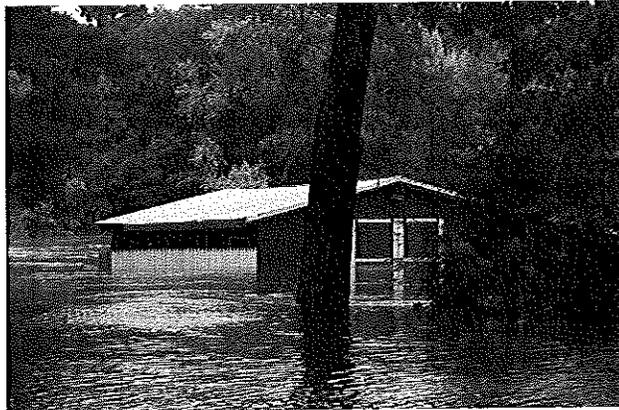
The Municipal Services Committee hosted two speakers in May and June 2008 to speak to towns regarding green initiatives. In May, Northeast Utilities' Tim Simmonds was present to review the energy efficiency programs offered through the CT Clean Energy Fund and Northeast Utilities. This included ways to obtain rebates for green technology.

The Eastern Connecticut State University's William Leahy spoke to the group in June about their Eastern Connecticut Institute for Sustainable Energy and how they can help towns leverage resources to be more energy efficient and "green" in their operations.

## **Planning for Natural Hazards**

In FY 2007-2008, CRCOG completed the Capitol Region Pre-Disaster Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan, a two-year effort funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The purpose of this plan is to set forth mitigation strategies that will 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.

Working with the Capitol Region Emergency Planning Commission's ESF-5 sub-committee, and local municipal officials from each member community, CRCOG's Community Development staff prepared the plan, which considers the following natural hazards that impact the Region: dam failure, drought, earthquake, flooding, forest fire, hurricane, tornado, and winter storm. The plan contains a brief introduction to the region and its current conditions. Section I evaluates relevant natural hazards. Section II establishes regional mitigation goals and strategies. Section III contains mitigation goals and strategies for each Capitol Region municipality. Appendix A describes the planning process, while other appendices provide further hazard and/or municipal information.



The Plan was adopted by the CRCOG Policy Board in June 2008, and has been accepted by FEMA. Each local legislative body in the region must adopt the plan in order to qualify for certain natural hazard mitigation grant funding.

## Public Safety and Homeland Security

### **Introduction**

The past year has been one of opportunities and growth for CRCOG's Public Safety Department. From being awarded Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) funds, to offering web-based Regional Emergency Deployment (RED) Plan training, the Public Safety Department has expanded its programs and their technological capabilities. We also continue to support our dynamic homeland security projects and our committee initiatives.

### **Capitalizing on Opportunities**

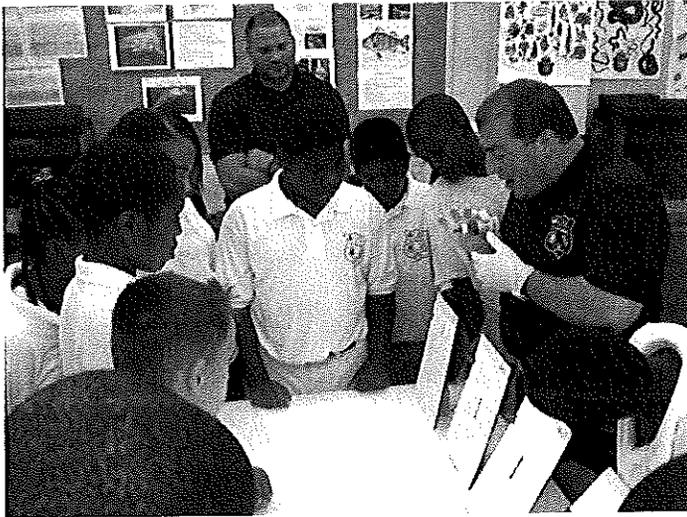
For the first time, CRCOG was eligible to apply for UASI and Justice Assistant Grant (JAG) funds and received awards in both cases. Through UASI, almost \$2 million in new federal funding will be coming to the region over the next three years under the Homeland Security Grant Program. The Hartford Metropolitan Statistical area (MSA) was designated as an eligible recipient in the spring of 2008. Building on the regional public safety structure and efforts already in place in the Capitol Region through CREPC, an Urban Area Working Group (UAWG) was quickly formed to guide the UASI process, identify priority investments and apply for funding. Using the results of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analyses conducted for each regional emergency support function earlier in the year, the UAWG has been developing a more comprehensive strategic plan for public safety investments and will be fine-tuning its spending plan for UASI funding in the fall.

The Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grant for Local Law Enforcement (JAG) program provides federal funds for local police departments to support a broad range of activities to prevent and control crime and improve the criminal justice system. This year, in an effort to support a regionalized approach to planning and administration, OPM contracted with CRCOG to support its 22 eligible member towns. Communities with high violent crime rates still receive funding directly from US Department of Justice (DOJ). The Capitol Region Chiefs of Police Association, through CRCOG, formed a JAG subcommittee to oversee the project. Departments were directed to select various pieces of equipment in order to enhance their crime fighting capability. Examples of items purchased include: tasers, portable signage, riot helmets, covert video recorder camera systems, spotlight mounted thermal image cameras and radios.

### **Collaboration Continues**

The Public Safety Council, the Department's original committee, continues to meet to address the region's needs. The Council is planning a rollout of new technology for its signature program, the CAPTAIN mobile data system, in the fall. The rollout will include upgraded MP881W modems that will allow the system higher bandwidth and Wi-Fi capability. The modems will be exchanged on a one for one basis.

Another exciting Public Safety initiative is the new CREC Inter-district Public Safety Academy Magnet School, officially opened for the 2008/2009 school year. The planning process for this innovative new academy has been underway for several years and CRCOG is pleased to participate in this endeavor with former CRCOG Chairman Steve



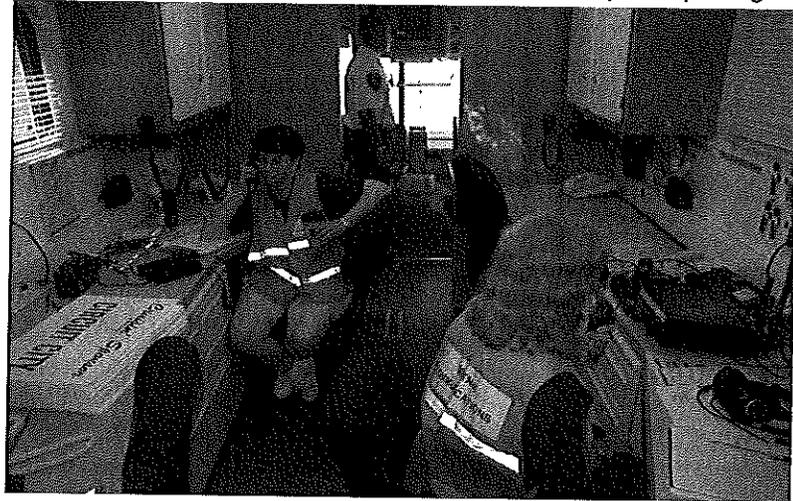
Cassano chairing the committee and several members of the Public Safety Council as charter members on the Governing Board. The school ran an intensive three-week summer session and then opened in September at an incubator site in Enfield with 105 registered cadets from ten different Capitol Region communities. This school is one of the first of its kind in the nation and will be used as a model within the State of Connecticut.

Collaboration also continues on the homeland security initiative. For the fourth consecutive year, municipalities around the Region elected CRCOG to administer their homeland security funds. All CRCOG committees are involved in overseeing the various homeland security projects, including the Capitol Region Chiefs of Police Association (CRCOPA), the Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee (CREPC), the CRCOG Policy Board, and the Public Safety Council. Homeland security projects that are being worked on include: expanding the CAPTAIN system into fire vehicles; equipping Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams and law enforcement officials; upgrading the three Regional Coordination Centers located in Manchester, New Britain and Windsor Locks; delivering training; purchasing medical supplies and special needs shelter equipment; and supporting animal response capabilities.

Currently, CRCOG is working on the FY 07 homeland security application. As part of this application, a SWOT analysis was completed for each of CREPC's Emergency Support Functions (R-ESFs). By identifying gaps in emergency preparedness and response capabilities, the SWOT analyses provided information critical in developing the FY 07 grant budget and spending plan. This year the group focused on sustaining current homeland security projects from FY 04 through FY 06.

## Expanding Training

The core of our Public Safety/Homeland Security training continued to be completion of NIMS or National Incident Management System requirements. This program was robust again in 2007/2008 as jurisdictions worked on being "NIMS compliant". By completing the NIMS requirements jurisdictions are eligible to continue to receive Homeland Security Grant funding. Not only does the training ensure continued funding, but it provides the knowledge, skills, and ability to manage all types of hazards. This theme continued into other areas to enhance regional collaboration and our capability to manage.



Regional training highlights include:

- Released the Regional Emergency Deployment (RED) Plan video to educate all regional stakeholders on our response plan. Approximately 1,000 people have completed RED Plan training.
- Conducted RED Plan tabletop exercises throughout the region.
- Completion of the National Fire Academy's All Hazard Incident Management Team (AHIMT) training program by 32 responders who, along with others previously completing the training, make up our regional Incident Management Team (IMT).
- Participated in Manchester's full-scale avian flu exercise.
- Commencement of medical training to operationalize the Medical Reserve Corps.
- Delivered training courses on emergency preparedness for people with disabilities.
- Held the Second Annual Statewide Citizen Corps Conference held at the Mohegan Sun Conference Center with approximately 250 attendees.
- As of June 2008 the Capitol Region has 2,121 full trained Civilian Emergency Response Team (CERT) members, 90 in training, and 609 pending training. It has ten established CERT teams and one team in training (Andover, Avon, Farmington Woods, Hartford 2 teams, Manchester, East Hartford, East Hartford Housing Authority, Enfield, Portland, and East Windsor in training).
- The Manchester CERT team, comprised of the Emcomm team (HAM radio), MBSAR team (Mountain Bike Search and Rescue), assisted in a successful rescue on Case Mountain in May.

## Creating and Enhancing Plans

CRCOG continues to work with the CT Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) in standardization of the Region's planning documents and supporting annexes. The current process entails revision of the support appendices for each Regional Emergency Support Function (RESF). This project will include revisions to the Region's RED Plan to assure appropriate consistency with the other DEMHS regional plans such as the Regional Emergency Operations Plan (REOP).

Two CRCOG contractors participate on National workgroups for the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) representing the Capitol Region-MMRS. This work is extremely important and will refocus the MMRS program enhancing medical response and preparedness for catastrophic events. This planning includes exploration of expanding the Capitol Region-MMRS cache of pharmaceutical countermeasures for the Region's first responders and their household family members.

Last fall, CREPC ESF-8, Public Health and Medical Services, enlisted the expertise of United States Military Academy cadets at West Point to help with our public health planning. The cadets presented their Capstone project findings entitled "Capitol Region Pandemic Influenza Response Plan" on May 8, 2008. The CAPSTONE analysis provides valuable insight into our current response capabilities and some hints as to the steps needed to develop and enhance them.

Additionally, in an effort to continually assess and improve, CRCOG and CREPC representatives are working with representatives from the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency to review best practices for conducting a capabilities assessment of all Regional Emergency Support Functions. Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency was one of the first to go through this national pilot program.

## Service Sharing and Purchasing Council

### **Service Sharing**

CRCOG has long advocated service sharing as one way to help towns continue to function effectively and provide high quality services in an era of tightening resources.

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 sharing projects that cover a broad range of local government services including Public Safety, Information Technology, Public Works, and Public Health. CRCOG received the entire \$5,196,027 from OPM in June 2008 and is currently earning interest on the money which will be applied back to the ten projects.

The grants will yield the following benefits for participating municipalities:

- Land for a new regional Animal Shelter in Manchester
- A standardized, web-based public health tracking system and hardware for 12 towns with expansion possibilities to other towns
- An infrastructure and pilot projects for IT application sharing and development of all CRCOG towns and others outside the Region
- Enhancements to the CRCOG web-based GIS
- An orthoflight of the Region for better GIS mapping data of CRCOG towns and some neighboring communities
- An oversight committee and equipment to maintain the Farmington Valley Trail
- A new regional traffic team
- A new regional public safety records management system
- A new regional law enforcement training center in Rocky Hill
- A new regional Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Manchester

Though the Regional Performance Incentive Program is permanent, the funding is not. CRCOG will be lobbying for more grant money in the 2009 legislative session.

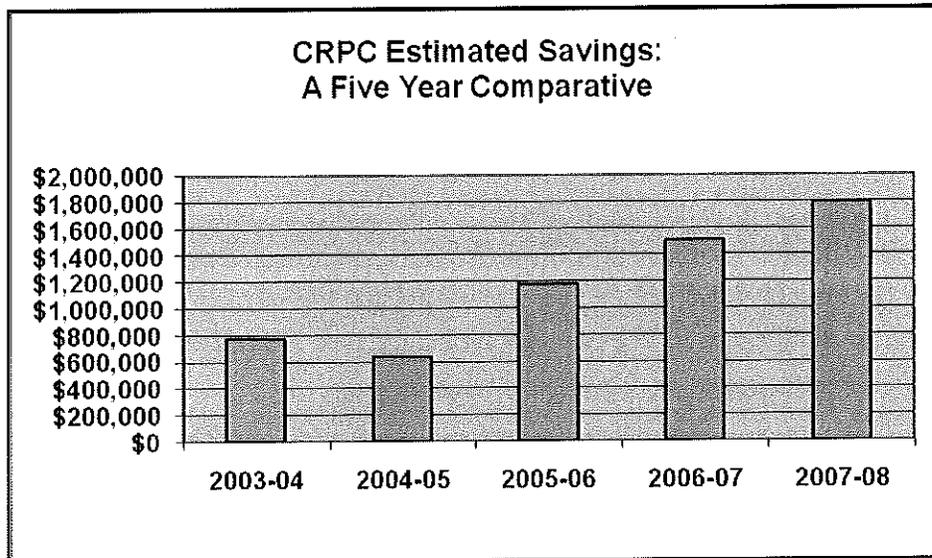
### **Purchasing Council**

CRPC continues to refine its e-Procurement system which works as a paperless online system for soliciting vendor bid responses. CRPC staff has seen a significant reduction in paper filing over the course of the 2007-08 year, despite still retaining printouts of bid results.

Income is beginning to come through the system in the third and fourth quarters of the 2007-08 fiscal year. So far, CRCOG has collected approximately \$24,000 through their half of the one percent fee charged to vendors. Vendor participation is up from previous years and the CRPC membership is slowly becoming acclimated to this new way of

communication. The e-Procurement system is a work in progress, however, and CRPC staff plan to work with the vendor (RFP Depot) to improve bid tabulation sheets and other reports.

The Capitol Region Purchasing Council continued to expand its membership (now 73 municipalities, boards of education and government agencies throughout the state) and services. Annual volume-based savings for 2007-08 are estimated at \$1.8 million.



CRCOG also continued its Natural Gas Procurement Program. We entered into a new contract with Hess that will end June 30, 2011. The Natural Gas Procurement Committee put in place a trigger strategy that would save towns 10% per year over the course of the contract. Unfortunately, the petroleum market was very volatile in the first part of 2008. Since then, things have settled down and we have been busy locking up natural gas futures as the market cooperates with our savings plans. Pricing is higher for 2008-09 but will be decreasing significantly after that. This program managed almost six million ccfs of natural gas worth approximately \$7.5 million in 2007-08.

## Financial summary

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REVENUES		
Intergovernmental revenues		
Federal	5,509,505	
State	1,144,148	
Other governmental agencies	1,838,284	
Interest Income	28,637	
Total Revenues		\$ 8,520,574
EXPENDITURES		
Personnel		1,684,836
Indirect Costs		241,441
Direct Expenses		3,481,087
Contractual		3,336,454
Total Expenditures		\$ 8,743,818
Excess of Revenue Over (Under) Expenditures		\$ (223,244)
Fund/Project Balance - July 1, 2005		2,532,858
Fund/Project Balance - June 30, 2006		\$ 2,309,614

## About CRCOG

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The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) is guided by the chief elected officials of our 29 Metro Hartford municipalities. The 29 towns making up 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, Suffield, Tolland, Vernon, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Windsor, and Windsor Locks.

The mayors, first selectmen, and town council chairmen who comprise our governing Policy Board recognize that the future of our individual members is tied to the future of our region. Our members have collaborated for more than 30 years on a wide range of projects to benefit our towns individually and the Region as a whole. CRCOG serves the Capitol Region and all our municipalities by:

- Helping members improve governmental efficiency and save tax dollars through shared services and other direct service initiatives;
- Promoting efficient transportation systems, responsible land use, preservation of land and natural resources, and effective economic development;
- Strengthening the Capital City of Hartford as the core of a strong Region, and as our economic, social and cultural center;
- Advocating for the Region and its towns with the State and Federal governments;
- Strengthening our regional community by helping coordinate regional agencies and programs; and
- Assisting local governments and citizens in articulating, advocating and implementing the vision, needs and values of their regional community.

## CRCOG Officers and Executive Committee

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### **CRCOG Officers**

Chairman Melody Currey, Mayor, East Hartford  
Vice Chairman John Adams, First Selectman, Granby  
Vice Chairman Eddie Perez, Mayor, Hartford  
Treasurer Mary Glassman, First Selectman, Simsbury  
Secretary Susan Karp, Chair, Town Council, Glastonbury

### **Executive Committee**

John Adams, First Selectman, Granby  
Jim Boucher, Assistant Majority Leader, City Council, Hartford  
John Carlson, Chair, Town Council, Avon  
Mike Clark, Chair, Town Council, Farmington  
Melody Currey, Mayor, East Hartford  
Mary Glassman, First Selectman, Simsbury  
Jim Hayden, First Selectman, East Granby  
Susan Karp, Chair, Town Council, Glastonbury  
Scott Kaupin, Mayor, Enfield  
Eddie Perez, Mayor, Hartford  
David Pinney, First Selectman, Somers  
Sydney Schulman, Mayor, Bloomfield  
Scott Slifka, Mayor, West Hartford  
Louis Spadaccini, Mayor, Manchester  
Steve Wawruck, First Selectman, Windsor Locks  
Chairperson of the CRCOG Foundation, Ex-Officio Member

### **Committee Chairs**

Community Development - Susan Karp  
Municipal Services - Bonnie Therrien  
Public Safety - Lee Erdmann  
Transportation - Jon Colman  
Finance/Personnel - Jon Colman  
Legislative - John Adams/Mary Glassman  
Regional Planning Commission - John Larensen

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