

Date: June 15, 2017
To: CRCOG Foundation Board of Directors and Annual Meeting Guests
From: Lyle Wray, Executive Director, CRCOG
Re: Background Information on Upcoming Regional Futures Initiative Discussion

As many of you know, the CRCOG Foundation and the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving have been working closely over the last six months as a follow-up to a facilitated session we co-hosted in December. That meeting was designed to determine if there is an appetite for moving beyond “informing to impact” and to identify ‘What Can We Do Differently?’ in order to effectuate positive change and bring prosperity to the region. There was significant support for coordinating impactful action, and a working group was recruited to consider the slate of recommendations that came out of those discussions and to help formulate next steps.

On a parallel tract, CRCOG has continued to engage key stakeholders and to articulate strategies for paving a ‘way forward’ for Connecticut, specifically outlining the need to:

- Build a “vision community”— recruit committed partners from the right mix to get things done and to be credible over the long term; and
- Come up with a short list of “Game Changers” – key drivers for achieving the vision

Given the perfect storm of events now facing our region/state that should inspire an urgent call for collective action, and the working group’s charge to recommend an organizational structure to advance an agenda and specific projects, we would like your input on the 23rd to help us preliminarily assess the following:

- If CRCOG and the CRCOG Foundation should proceed with a regional futures initiative;
- If there is interest in the CRCOG Foundation serving as a backbone organization to help steward a yearlong feasibility study;
- If other like-minded organizations, and their CEOs, are willing to commit their time and resources over the next year to see if this has any traction (perhaps via MOUs with CRCOG);
- If we can truly engage the corporate community with the help of government leaders and various state and regional organizations; and
- Who should be invited to participate in a ‘next steps’ meeting?

In advance of our discussion, I would encourage you to review the packet of related materials we have assembled, including: a copy of the presentation I made to the Connecticut Community Bankers Association in January; several articles on the Minneapolis-St. Paul-based Itasca Project and one on Charlotte’s Executive Leadership Council; notes from a recent call with an Itasca Project Manager; and HFPG’s status update on the ‘What Can We Do Differently?’ meetings.

I look forward to seeing you next week.