

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Capitol Region Secures Funds for Environmental Testing

Hartford, Connecticut - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced today that it will award the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) \$300,000.00 to undertake environmental testing on sites in and around Hartford.

Lyle Wray, Executive Director of the Capitol Region Council of Governments said, "We are very grateful for EPA's award of this brownfields assessment grant which will enable CRCOG to continue its efforts to identify contaminated sites in the Capitol Region. Environmental assessment of brownfields is an important catalyst for the redevelopment of neglected and underutilized sites in the area and will advance our vision of transforming the Capitol Region into a viable and sustainable region. Work we undertake with this grant funding will lead to increased value of these problem properties which will bring additional revenue to our municipalities, help revitalize communities, and provide alternatives to sprawl development. Our focus will be on sites in Hartford and in Opportunity Zones, particularly those along the region's bus rapid transit, CTfastrak, and CTrail, the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Rail line. We are excited to get to work on this program."

Using this grant funding, CRCOG will hire licensed environmental professionals to carry out environmental assessments and remedial action planning on municipally-sponsored properties suspected of being contaminated by petroleum and/or other hazardous substances. In the upcoming months, CRCOG will ask its member cities and towns to file applications for the program. Work may be carried out on a site owned by a municipality as well as those owned by a private or non-profit entity.

The target area for this new grant will focus on sites near transit station areas particularly those in Opportunity Zones in the City of Hartford. CRCOG recently identified over 240 potentially contaminated sites in the transit corridors along the CTfastrak and CTrail lines. The transit corridor encompasses just 3.5% of the area of the entire 38-town region but has nearly 25% of the region's suspected brownfield sites. The City of Hartford, the Capitol Region's most distressed community, is among America's poorest cities. Sites in Hartford which have transit-oriented development potential and/or will help spur growth within Opportunity Zones will be prioritized. While assessment of sites in Hartford will be a prime focus of the program, other sites in other communities especially those in or near Opportunity Zones or along transit lines are also potential candidates for funding.

The new grant funding will allow CRCOG to continue assisting its member cities and towns through its MetroHartford Brownfields Assessment Program. CRCOG established the MetroHartford Brownfields Program in 2004 and has used \$1,600,000 in previous EPA grants as well as a \$200,000 grant from the State Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) to conduct 68 environmental site assessments and/or remediation planning projects throughout its 38-town region.

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About Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG)—Working Together for a Better Region

CRCOG is established under the Connecticut General Statutes as a voluntary association of municipal governments serving the 38 Metro Hartford municipalities. Our members have collaborated for more than 30 years on a wide range of projects related to planning, transportation, service sharing, and cooperative procurement to benefit our towns individually and the region as a whole.

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