

**Cost Review Sub-Committee Meeting**  
**CRCOG, 241 Main Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Hartford, CT 06106**  
**Monday February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019**  
**11:00 AM**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Larry Baril	Avon
Chris Edge	Berlin
Jon Colman	Bloomfield
Patrice Carson	Bolton
Todd Penney	Coventry
Doug Wilson	East Hartford
Donald Nunes	Enfield
Sandy Fry	Hartford
Jeff LaMalva	Manchester
Derek Dilaj	Mansfield
Peter Hughes	Marlborough
Mark Moriarty	New Britain
Gary Fuerstenburg	Newington
Jim Sollmi	Rocky Hill
Jeff Doolittle	South Windsor
Gerry Turbert	Suffield
David Smith	Vernon
Duane Martin	West Hartford
Derrick Gregor	Wethersfield
Bob Jarvis	Windsor
Jennifer Rodriguez	Windsor Locks
 <b><u>Guests</u></b>	
Jonathan Thiesse	Bloomfield
 <b><u>Staff</u></b>	
Cara Radzins	CRCOG
Sotoria Montanari	CRCOG
Karen Stewartson	CRCOG
Hannah Casey	CRCOG

DRAFT until  
Endorsed by  
the  
Committee

- 1. Roll Call** – Mr. Jon Colman called the meeting to order at 11:04 am
- 2. Public Forum** – No one chose to speak.
- 3. Adoption of January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Subcommittee Meeting Minutes** – A motion was made by Bob Jarvis, from the Town of Windsor, seconded by James Sollmi from

the Town of Rocky Hill. This motion was passed unanimously with one abstention made by Todd Penney from the Town of Coventry.

- 4. 2019 Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program** – Ms. Cara Radzins mentioned to the Sub-Committee that the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) will expire in 2020. To be prepared for subsequent legislation, CRCOG will soon be soliciting for Transportation Alternative Set A-side Program (TASP) project proposals for the five-year period of FFY 2021 to FFY 2025. While this solicitation will assume continuation of current funding levels, future legislation will dictate how many projects can be initiated. Ms. Radzins also said that prioritized projects must be submitted by Transportation Management Area (TMA). As such, CRCOG staff is seeking input from the Transportation Committee on how to proceed before releasing the solicitation. Funding allocations are \$5,789,900 for the Hartford TMA and \$565,610 for the Springfield TMA, for a total of \$6,355,510. All Springfield funds must be used in CRCOG Towns. The Hartford TMA, though composed mostly of CRCOG Towns, also includes towns from Northwest Hills COG, Naugatuck Valley COG, and Lower Connecticut River Valley COG. Thus, CRCOG must submit a joint project ranking with these MPOs. CRCOG Staff recommends that we submit four projects, with one being from NVCOG. Ms. Radzins stated that staff was looking for Sub-Committee action on whether to cap the NVCOG project at \$1 million (the “fair share” of the funding allotment based on TMA population distribution) or to allow NVCOG to submit a project of the same size (\$1.5-\$2m) as CRCOG towns will be allowed to submit.

A Sub-Committee asked whether RiverCOG would also be submitting a project. Ms. Radzins responded that RiverCOG received Hartford TMA funds for a TASP project in 2016 and that the COGs met and decided that the non-CRCOG project for this solicitation would be from NVCOG. A Sub-Committee member asked about the size of the potential NVCOG project and whether it would impact the ability of CRCOG towns to advance projects. Ms. Radzins noted that she did not have details on the project specifics but believed the full project cost was in the neighborhood of \$2.5 million. She explained, however, that the NVCOG project would be subject to the same funding caps as will be imposed for CRCOG projects and that NVCOG would need to find additional funding to reach the full project amount, if needed. She also stated that the intention is to submit three CRCOG projects along with the one from NVCOG. A Sub-Committee member asked for clarification regarding the relationship between CRCOG and the other MPOs within the TMA. Ms. Radzins explained that the MPOs meeting at least annually to discuss items of mutual concern and coordinate on issues that transcend MPO boundaries. She noted that the TMA boundary is based on the Urbanized Area, as defined by the Census, and that is why it does not align with MPO boundaries. A Sub-Committee member asked if this solicitation is coming from CTDOT. Ms. Radzins said that CRCOG did receive notice from CTDOT regarding a call for TASP projects, and this notice was the impetus for the discussion at hand.

Ms. Radzins stated that once CRCOG Staff understand the parameters for including the NVCOG project, a solicitation will be distributed within a few weeks with details. Further discussion regarding the ranking process for this program will occur at the March 25<sup>th</sup> Cost Review Sub-Committee meeting. A motion was made by Patrice Carson from the Town of Bolton, seconded by Jeffrey Doolittle from the Town of South Windsor, to recommend to the Transportation Committee that NVCOG be able to submit a project of the same size as CRCOG projects. This motion was passed unanimously.

5. **LOTICIP Project Cost Increases** – Ms. Sotoria Montanari reviewed the LOTICIP funding increase request for the Multi-Use Trail project on Mountain Road (Route 168) in Suffield. Ms. Montanari mentioned that this project was approved under the 2015 LOTICIP Solicitation and is currently in the application phase. The Town of Suffield is requesting a funding increase of \$392,400 from \$355,200 to \$747,600 to address feedback from a CTDOT application review. Specifically, CTDOT requested that the town review drainage impacts to the roadway, the proposed trail elevation, and whether sloping grading impacts will be within the right of way. Ms. Montanari stated that the town hired a consultant firm that completed a detailed topographical survey. They determined that there would be considerable easement acquisitions. Ms. Montanari said that because of the proposed grading and for the trail to remain in the Right of Way and to create a more substantial trail structure, the costs increased substantially. Additionally, a three-rail wood fencing was recommended. Mr. Gerald Turbet provided additional clarification and information to the Sub-Committee. Ms. Montanari noted that even with the cost increase, the project's total cost remained within the guidelines for trail projects.

Sub-Committee members discussed the proposed cost increase, noting concern that the project doubled in size. Although the increase is more palatable because of the relatively small initial cost of the project, Sub-Committee members expressed a desire to try to avoid such significant changes in the future. Ms. Montanari noted that a more in-depth initial review is not part of the process. A Sub-Committee member asked if approving this increase would impact any other projects, and Ms. Montanari said no. Another Sub-Committee member asked if CTDOT would be satisfied with the changes associated with the cost increase. Mr. Turbet stated that he believed they would be.

A motion was made by Mark Moriarty from the City of New Britain, seconded by Jim Sollmi from the Town of Rocky Hill to consider approval of an additional \$392,400 of LOTICIP funding for the project, increasing the costs from \$355,200 to \$747,600. This motion was passed unanimously.

6. **LOTICIP Project Cost Analysis** – Ms. Sotoria Montanari reviewed the cost analysis of the LOTICIP Projects. At the last Sub-Committee meeting, there was a discussion regarding the cost increases in LOTICIP program. The committee requested a cost analysis from the application submittal to the Authorization to Award. Ms. Montanari stated that the two tables and a graph provided represent the flow of costs

throughout the LOTCIP project cycle. The two tables represent projects that have received *Commitment to Fund Letters*, a total of 46 projects.

CRCOG initially approved just under \$68 million in LOTCIP projects from the solicitations. Twelve (12) projects received funding increases, totaling \$4.9 million or 7.7 percent of the initial total. Ms. Montanari reviewed the twenty-four (24) projects that have received Authorization to Award Letters and are represented on the blue table. Five (5) projects received increases totaling \$2.7 million or 9.1 percent of the initial approved total. The totals on the bottom of the tables highlighted in yellow represent numbers used in the graph. The final total Authorization to Award amounts totaled \$29.5 million, or approximately 1% more than the initial solicitation award, and approximately 7.5% less than the total amount when considering funding increases.

The Sub-Committee discussed the fact that Final Cost Estimates seem to be higher than actual construction costs, which may be due to the conservative nature of CTDOT cost estimation requirements. It was noted that having a buffer can be beneficial, but there may also be negative implications related to securing local matches for higher initial estimates. Additional discussion was had related to changing CTDOT standards and a desire for MPOs to have more autonomy over the LOTCIP program. It was noted, however, that the over 1% cost difference between the original solicitation amounts and the final Authorization to Award amounts is a testament to the success of the program and the knowledge of the town staff who prepare the applications.

7. **Other Business** – There was no other business discussed.
  - The next Cost Review Sub-Committee meeting is scheduled for **Monday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 11:00 AM**
8. **Adjourn** –The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 am.