

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** April 20, 2020  
**TO:** CRCOG Policy Board  
**FROM:** Lyle Wray, Executive Director  
**SUBJECT: COVID-19 Reopening and Economic Recovery**

As we get beyond the current COVID-19 emergency and look towards reopening and plans at the state and federal levels, CRCOG staff has some early suggestions on what role CRCOG would have in this process. Some ideas are as follows:

### Reopening Phase

#### Develop Municipal Best Practices and Checklist for Local Action

As municipalities look to open town halls and public spaces, there will be several practical matters to take into consideration. For example, practical re-opening and consideration of how close people sit together within an office and installing plexiglass or glass barriers at counters.

Although some of this activity will be directed by state and CT DPH guidelines, CRCOG staff anticipates a need for checklists, reference guidelines and best practices and possibly training prior to re-opening:

- Town halls to the public
- Town and public meetings
- Park and recreation programs
- Public pools
- Town public spaces
- Other areas

CRCOG staff could work with the Municipal Services Committee along with local public health departments and districts and CRCOG Public Safety to develop the re-opening guidance, checklist and protocol website, training, resources and documents.

#### Regional Contact Tracing Staff and Volunteer Pool

As it has been clear, rapid available testing and thorough contact tracing will be key in the ability to effectively re-open and remain open. Depending on the state plan and the state resources there could potentially be a role CRCOG could play in developing a shared pool of contact tracers to follow up on positive test results. The assumption being “hot spots” or outbreaks will be local and concentrated, and a regional pool of tracers might be an effective tool to share across the region so that effective follow up action could be taken.

## **Economic Recovery Phase**

Connecticut has about a \$100 billion state domestic product. Estimates are for a 6 percent decline in 2020 followed by a 4 percent increase in 2021. The state of Connecticut will face a budget deficit now and into the next biennial budget cycle. With the public health emergency, CRCOG staff anticipates this structural budget deficit problem will be exacerbated. This increased fiscal pressure will have a downward effect in our region and all our communities. Moreover, grand lists will also be facing downward pressures.

CRCOG's continued role in implementing and advancing the economic development strategy will be critical in assisting the economic recovery. CRCOG should remain attuned to federal and state economic recovery efforts and identify where the region might be helpful to facilitate recovery.

### **State Level Advocacy**

Going forward, it is important that the state guideline process hear from the local health departments perspective. We would suggest advocating for a greater local voice in the state guideline development processes. Continuing to advocate for local health department input in the state processes is important.