

CRCOG Cost Review Sub-Committee Meeting
Monday, June 28, 2021
11:00am
Meeting held remotely via Zoom

DRAFT until
 Endorsed by
 the
 Committee

Name

Jon Colman
 Patrice Carson
 Todd Penney
 Tim Webb
 Russ Arnold
 Kirk Severance
 Sandy Fry
 Kevin Kelly
 Jeff LaMalva
 Peter Hughes
 Rob Trottier
 Jim Sollmi
 Jeff Shea
 Jeffrey Doolittle
 Karen Isherwood
 Duane Martin
 Derrick Gregor
 Adam Kessler

Organization

Bloomfield
 Bolton
 Coventry
 Ellington
 Farmington
 Granby
 Hartford
 Hebron
 Manchester
 Marlborough
 New Britain
 Rocky Hill
 Simsbury
 South Windsor
 Suffield
 West Hartford
 Wethersfield
 Windsor

Guests

Jonathan Thiesse
 Lori Spielman
 Mark Moriarty
 Stephen Sopolak

Bloomfield
 Ellington
 New Britain
 Rocky Hill

Staff

Robert Aloise
 Mike Cipriano
 Ryan Faulkner
 Roger Krahn
 Tim Malone
 Sotoria Montanari
 Anirea Ortiz
 Caitlin Palmer
 Cara Radzins
 Karen Stewartson

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- 1. Roll Call** – Alphabetically by Member Municipality, then others. The meeting was called to order at 11:00 am by the Chair, Jon Colman from the Town of Bloomfield.

2. **Public Forum** – No one chose to speak.
3. **Adoption of Meeting Minutes from April 26, 2021** – A motion was made by Lori Spielman from the Town of Ellington, seconded by Patrice Carson from the Town of Bolton, to approve the meeting minutes from the Sub-Committee meeting on May 24, 2021. This motion was passed unanimously with four (4) abstentions made by Russ Arnold from the Town of Farmington, Kevin Kelly from the Town of Hebron, Jeff Shea from the Town of Simsbury, and Karen Isherwood from the Town of Suffield.
4. **2022 LOTCIP Project Solicitation: DRAFT Project Selection Policy** – Ms. Sotora Montanari reviewed information from last month’s meeting regarding the 2022 LOTCIP Project Solicitation DRAFT Selection Policy. Ms. Montanari noted that CRCOG staff proposes selecting \$38,000,000 in LOTCIP projects. She mentioned the categories and amounts were listed in the memo distributed in the meeting materials. Maximum amounts per projects for each category were also listed. Ms. Montanari mentioned that the proposed dates have been pushed back by a month to align more closely with municipal budget timelines. A letter to municipalities will be issued in September, with proposals due to CRCOG in January 2022. Ms. Montanari stated that the intent of this meeting was to review the 2022 Project Selection Policy so that the Transportation Committee can approve the policy at their July meeting.

Ms. Montanari began reviewing the Selection Policy by generally identifying the revisions to the 2022 Selection Policy compared to the 2020 Selection Policy. She first mentioned the addition of incentive projects, which articulates a historic practice of conditionally awarding high ranking projects to municipalities with more than two projects in design. The advancement of the projects would be contingent on that municipality completing one of its two designs. Ms. Montanari then focused on the proposed changes to rating criteria. The reconstruction structural improvements rating points were decreased to allow for an increase in rating points to traffic safety. The reason for this change was the adoption of a Regional Transportation Safety Plan and safety Performance Measures. Ms. Montanari noted that projects that address a safety issue identified in the regional plan will garner additional points in this category.

CRCOG staff recommends bridges be included in the solicitation, though such projects typically do not rank well against reconstruction projects. Ms. Montanari stated that in six months staff can revisit whether budget permits a standalone bridge solicitation. Additional revisions included adding information on MS4 permitting regulations and awarding points to municipalities who address disconnecting Directly Connected Impervious Area (DCIA) in their projects. She noted that reconstruction projects that integrate complete streets components may receive up to 16 points. Staff recommends no changes to this category, as the solicitation is a competitive process and additional funds were allocated in a set-aside for rural communities. Also, CRCOG staff is willing to help municipalities with complete streets integration and will assign a contact person for this purpose. Ms. Montanari said there were no changes to the pavement rehabilitation or pedestrian improvements category rating criteria, just more detail as to how projects are assessed. Mr. Rob Aloise noted that changes should be discussed now so the selection policy may be updated as needed and then approved in July to maintain the solicitation schedule. There were no changes suggested.

Mr. Peter Hughes from the Town of Marlborough asked if any decisions have been made about pavement service life standards, as some application reviews have required 20 years instead of 15 years. Mr. Aloise said that CRCOG staff had a meeting with the CTDOT LOTCIP group to discuss this issue and have scheduled an additional meeting with the CTDOT Pavement Unit to address these concerns. He said CTDOT seemed willing to allow flexibility regarding service life, but more would be known after the next meeting. Mr. Hughes said that we should address the service life issue ahead of the solicitation to avoid unnecessary project cost increases going forward. Mr. Aloise mentioned that staff will request written clarification from the pavement unit and that the current selection policy states that the pavement treatment should be appropriate to the PCI rating. Mr. Aloise also mentioned that he had suggested at the previous CTDOT meeting that pavement review consultants that are amenable to all parties could be utilized to avoid delays and add additional oversight to the projects.

Mr. Russ Arnold from the Town of Farmington noted his frustration about project delays caused by CTDOT's review process. He stated that municipal roads should not require such extensive reviews, and he is concerned about LOTCIP reviews becoming as extensive as those under the STP-Urban program. Mr. Arnold noted that his frustration was not a reflection of the work of the CRCOG staff. Mr. Aloise stated that CTDOT acknowledged that reviews are very detailed, and they are willing to address this issue with their staff. Mr. Aloise also indicated that he suggested the possibility of combining reviews for State roadway projects so that the review process may be more efficient. Mr. Jon Colman from the Town of Bloomfield stated that CRCOG staff should meet with Dr. Lyle Wray to strategize a plan for addressing these issues with CTDOT. Mr. Colman mentioned there were conflicting responses from various CTDOT units, and unresolved issues may need to be addressed above the staff level. He suggested the possibility of meeting with the Deputy Commissioner, contacting representatives of the Governor's office, and/or making the concerns public. Mr. Steve Sopelak from the Town of Rocky Hill agreed that some reviews have become more stringent, especially with SHPO coordination. Mr. Kevin Kelly from the Town of Hebron added that some of the comments were picky and did not seem to add value to the project. Mr. Colman reiterated his sentiments regarding the need to escalate this discussion and suggested that it may be most appropriate to have municipal representatives voice their concerns directly to CTDOT at a meeting instead of just having CRCOG staff relay the issues. Mr. Aloise mentioned that CTDOT is aiming to distribute new guidelines soon, and more information will be provided to the Committee at the July meeting.

5. Other Business – Mr. Jonathan Thiesse from the Town of Bloomfield asked if there was any discussion on CTDOT's proposed ROW policy changes. It was noted that this topic was not on the Sub-Committee agenda, but it would be discussed during the Transportation Committee meeting.

- The next Cost Review Sub-Committee Meeting is scheduled for July 26, 2021 at 11:30am. Mr. Jon Colman from the Town of Bloomfield requested that Ms. Patrice Carson from the Town of Bolton chair the July meeting in his absence. Ms. Carson confirmed that she would do so.

6. Adjourn – The meeting was adjourned at 11:37am via a motion by Patrice Carson from the Town of Bolton, seconded by Lori Spielman from the Town of Ellington.