

CRCOG Transportation Committee Meeting
Monday, September 20th, 2021
12:00 Noon
Meeting held remotely via Zoom

DRAFT until
Endorsed by
the Committee

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Larry Baril	Avon
Chris Edge	Berlin
Jon Colman	Bloomfield
Patrice Carson	Bolton
Neil Pade	Canton
Gary Haynes	East Granby
Doug Wilson	East Hartford
Len Norton	East Windsor
Tim Webb	Ellington
Donald Nunes	Enfield
Russ Arnold	Farmington
Kirk Severance	Granby
Kevin Kelly	Hebron
Jeff LaMalva	Manchester
John Carrington	Mansfield
Peter Hughes	Marlborough
Rob Trottier	New Britain
Gary Fuerstenberg	Newington
Steve Sopelak	Rocky Hill
Tom Roy	Simsbury
Todd Rolland	Somers
Jeffrey Doolittle	South Windsor
Devin Cowperthwaite	Stafford
Karen Isherwood	Suffield
David Smith	Vernon
Greg Sommer	West Hartford
Derrick Gregor	Wethersfield
Adam Kessler	Windsor
Jennifer Rodriguez	Windsor Locks
Mary Deppe	GHTD

<u>Guests</u>	
Gary Giroux	Cardinal Engineering
Kevin Burnham	CTDOT
Grayson Wright	CTDOT
<i>Name Unknown</i>	CT-N
Dylan Reilly	Farmington
Jennifer Carrier	FHWA
Charles Harlow	Fuss & O'Neill
Mary Mitta	Stafford
Casey Hardin	TranSystems
James Kulpa	VHB

Staff

Robert Aloise	CRCOG
Mike Cipriano	CRCOG
Ryan Faulkner	CRCOG
Norell Ferguson	CRCOG/Intern
Maureen Goulet	CRCOG
Roger Krahn	CRCOG
Tim Malone	CRCOG
Aaliyah Miller	CRCOG
Sotoria Montanari	CRCOG
Cara Radzins	CRCOG
Karen Stewartson	CRCOG
Terri Thompson	CRCOG
Pauline Yoder	CRCOG
Dr. Lyle Wray	CRCOG/Consultant

- 1. Roll Call** – Alphabetically by Member Municipality, then others. The meeting was called to order at 12:08 pm by the Chair, Mr. Jon Colman from the Town of Bloomfield. Mr. Colman noted that the following three new representatives had recently joined the Transportation Committee: Mr. Nat Gale from the City of Hartford, Mr. Steve Sopelak from the Town of Rocky Hill, and Mr. David Corcoran from the Town of Tolland.
- 2. Public Forum** – No one choose to speak.
- 3. Adoption of Minutes from Transportation Committee on July 26, 2021** – A motion was made by Tom Roy from the Town of Simsbury, seconded by Patrice Carson from the Town of Bolton, to accept the meeting minutes from July 26, 2021. Mr. Kevin Kelly from the Town of Hebron noted that he attended the July meeting and that the minutes should be corrected to reflect that. This motion, along with the correction, was passed unanimously with six (6) abstentions by Chris Edge from the Town of Berlin, Garry Haynes from the Town of East Granby, Tim Webb from the Town of Ellington, Donald Nunes from the Town of Enfield, Steve Sopelak from the Town of Rocky Hill, and Todd Rolland from the Town of Somers.
- 4. Staff Reports**
 - 60 Seconds for Safety** – Mr. Roger Krahn shared that the UConn T2 Center would be holder a webinar entitled “New Speed Legislation Explained: A Conversation with OSTA” on September 21st. Mr. Krahn also mentioned that CTDOT’s Office of Highway Safety is raising awareness about two (2) new Statewide Pedestrian Safety Laws. Mr. Krahn explained that vehicles will now be required to yield to pedestrians at crosswalks if there is an intent to cross by the pedestrian. He further stated that a new law related to “dooring” will make it illegal to open a door for a lengthy period, resulting in contact with a vehicle. The highlighted two laws will take effect on October 1, 2021.
 - TIM Field Guide** – Ms. Terri Thompson shared that the TIM Coalition set up a workforce to develop a Field Guide for Traffic Incident Scene Management, and the guide has been completed and delivered. Ms. Thompson mentioned that an evaluation form will be handed out with the Field Guide for feedback on items to be improved in future versions. Ms. Thompson stated that she will be working to distribute the guide to interested Towns and First Responders.

-) **CTDOT State Rail Plan** – Ms. Radzins mentioned that CTDOT is in the process of updating the State Rail Plan. Ms. Radzins said that public meeting were held earlier in September and that a virtual room has been created to share information about the effort (<https://aecomviz.com/CTRailPlan/>). Ms. Radzins also mentioned that a survey will be open until October 15, 2021 for those who would like to share their initial thoughts on what should be included in the plan. Ms. Radzins shared a link to the survey (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/C6RFP7J>).
-) **CTrides Quarterly Report** – Mr. Ryan Faulkner provided highlights from the **CTrides** Quarterly Report for April-June 2021. Mr. Faulkner said *Along the Lines*, a podcast hosted by Rich Andreski, CTDOT Bureau Chief of Public Transportation, included episodes this quarter ranging from Biking as Essential Travel, The Future of Rail Travel in Connecticut, and Trends in Ridership. *The Connecticut in Motion Webinar* series, in partnership with the Hartford Business Journal, released two episodes in the quarter. The webinars covered the Impacts of COVID-19 on Public Transit and Workplace Trends, and there were more than 200 attendees for each webinar. Mr. Faulkner also mentioned **CTrides** helped to develop marketing materials for the fare-free weekend bus service program that took place over the summer, called Weekend Wheels. **CTrides**, CTDOT, and DEEP also worked together on the ParkConneCT promotion to encourage people to use the free weekend and holiday bus service to State parks and beaches. Mr. Faulkner stated that in preparation for the new school year, **CTrides** updated marketing materials for the Roads Scholar Program and the U-Pass program. Edits to the **CTrides** website, including the addition of a “news” page and alerts banner on the home screen to help market the Connecticut in Motion Webinar Series and Along the Lines Podcast, were also implemented. During this quarter, the **CTrides** outreach team held 175 events and meetings and launched the 2021 Return to Work survey, which received over 5,000 survey responses.
-) **MPO Certification Review** – Mr. Robert Aloise mentioned that every four years FHWA and FTA conduct a review of CRCOG’s transportation planning program. He said that the initial part of this process, a desk review, is currently underway. Mr. Aloise noted that this year’s review will be held virtually, and the October Transportation Committee meeting will be integrated into the review. He stated that the schedule for the review is still being finalized but that the Transportation Committee meeting on October 25th may be held at an earlier time than usual.
-) **2022 LOTCIP Project Solicitation and CTDOT Coordination Update** – Ms. Montanari shared that a request for proposals (RFP) for LOTCIP projects is anticipated to be distributed in late September, with proposals due in January and project selection approval anticipated in May 2022. Ms. Montanari said CRCOG has worked closely with CTDOT to review long-standing inefficiencies in the guidelines. To assist municipalities with pavement treatment decisions and categorizing the type of pavement treatment, Ms. Montanari stated that CRCOG will be offering a pre-application pavement treatment opinion by a pavement expert. This consultant will be pre-vetted by CTDOT, and services will be free to our communities. Additional details will be forthcoming. In addition, though CTDOT would like a 20-year service life on all projects, CTDOT will allow 15 years for most minor pavement rehabilitation projects. Ms. Montanari mentioned CRCOG would like the RFP to coincide with the revised CTDOT LOTCIP Guidelines, which are forthcoming.

Mr. Robert Aloise gave an update on LOTCIP coordination with CTDOT. Mr. Aloise stated that CTDOT and CRCOG met over several months to address ongoing program challenges and progress has been made on several issues. Meeting details

and progress made were listed in the memo distributed to Committee members. Although substantial progress has been made, Mr. Aloise stated there were two remaining issues that could not be pursued at staff level, as they required elevation of the issues to a higher level. The first issue pertains to eligibility, which if changed, would allow work on non-federal aid roadways. The second higher level issue is elimination of CTDOT oversight. Based on the discussion during the Cost Review Sub-Committee Meeting, CRCOG staff will not be pursuing eligibility changes but will be assessing the necessary staff and/or consultant effort that would be needed for a pilot program of regional oversight. Mr. Aloise said once he determines what resources are necessary, he can better outline a plan and present his findings to both the new CRCOG Executive Director and the Transportation Committee.

Mr. Peter Hughes from the Town of Marlborough raised concerns regarding expediting project processes, the flow of information, and the speed implementing potential improvements. Mr. Hughes noted that it felt like CTDOT was in sole control of LOTCIP and was effectively withholding funds from the Towns. Mr. Jon Colman from the Town of Bloomfield noted that he understood this frustration, but he reminded the Committee that the decision had been for Staff to meet with CTDOT to identify ways to streamline the LOTCIP process. Once these discussions are complete, decisions can be made regarding the next steps if the Committee is not satisfied with progress made. Mr. Colman noted that in the meantime Staff will need to complete an assessment of resources needed to manage LOTCIP in order to be sure that the region would be able to take it over.

) **Other: CT Recreational Trails Grant Program** – Mr. Tim Malone shared that the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) is accepting proposals for the Connecticut Recreational Trails Program. Proposals are due by November 1, 2021. Mr. Malone mentioned that this program provides funding for planning and design of trails; construction of new trails; maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails; access to trails by persons with disabilities; purchase and lease of trail construction and maintenance equipment; acquisition of land or easements for a trail, or for trail corridors; and operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection as related to recreational trails. Mr. Malone stated that \$3 million is available and previous awards have ranged from \$45,000 to \$300,000. He also mentioned that program funding can cover up to 80% of eligible project costs. Mr. Malone said more information can be found under News on the front page of the CRCOG website.

) **Other: CRCOG Staff Changes** – Mr. Robert Aloise introduced two (2) new CRCOG employees. Maureen Goulet is a Principal Program Manager who will be overseeing CRCOG's Brownfields program. Norell Ferguson is a Planning Intern from UConn who will be working at CRCOG for the 2021-2022 school year. The Committee welcomed them both.

5. TIP Amendments – Mr. Robert Aloise reviewed the TIP Amendment.

) Enfield- High Speed Rail Crossing to Bike & Ped. Trails along CT River
Mr. Aloise stated that this project was funded through an earmark and that the Town of Enfield wishes to cancel the project. Mr. Aloise noted that canceling the project would not cancel the earmark, and that the earmark would remain available for the Town to use on a different project. There was a question about how long the earmark would remain available. Mr. Aloise said that the earmark funding would only be lost if there was a federal rescission. A motion was made by Patrice Carson from the Town

of Bolton, seconded by David Smith from the Town of Vernon, to accept the TIP Amendment. This motion was passed unanimously.

- 6. LOTCIP Funding Increase/Scope Modification Requests: Stafford Leonard Road Bridge Project (L134-0002)** – Ms. Sotoria Montanari stated that the Town of Stafford requested a LOTCIP funding increase of \$1,198,486 from \$2,601,000 to \$3,799,468 (46% increase) for the Stafford Leonard Road Bridge Project based on a competitive low bid. Ms. Montanari mentioned the Town completed a successful design, was issued an Authorization to Advertise Letter on August 5th, and opened its public bid September 8th. The Town received five (5) bid packages ranging from \$3,401,223 to \$5,780,303, which were considerably higher than the Engineer’s estimate of \$2,601,000. Ms. Montanari stated the disparity between the estimate and the lowest responsible bidder were due to several factors. The bridge replacement is a complicated project with complex risks associated with constructing the bridge on top of an existing dam. The contractors indicated performing work requires minimizing the vibration to ensure there is no damage to the dam underneath the bridge. She said the contractors were very concerned about lowering the impoundments and cofferdams required to complete the project. TIM Technologies, owner of the dam, utilizes the water for the processes at their adjacent plant.

Ms. Montanari noted that another factor for the increase was the industry had recently seen considerable price increases due to supply chain and labor shortages. Ms. Montanari also stated that included in the bid prices are costs associated with the repair of the dam amounting to \$282,000, considered non-participating costs paid by TIM Technologies. This, in turn, will reduce the LOTCIP funding portion to \$3,166,223, however, with the 20% contingencies and incidentals, the total amount of funding to complete the project increases to \$3,799,468. Ms. Montanari noted that this funding increase request had been discussed and approved by the Cost Review Sub-Committee.

A motion was made by Peter Hughes from the Town of Marlborough, seconded by Steve Sopolak from the Town of Rocky Hill, to approve an additional \$1,198,468 of LOTCIP funding for the Stafford Leonard Road Bridge (L134-0002) project, increasing the funding approval from \$2,601,000 to \$3,799,468. This motion was passed unanimously.

- 7. Resolution: Bikeshare Feasibility Update** – Mr. Mike Cipriano stated that CRCOG developed a bike share feasibility study in 2014 and the CRCOG Policy Board has authorized \$50,000 in Regional Service Grant (RSG) funding to conduct a Bikeshare Feasibility Update. Mr. Cipriano noted that CRCOG has conducted a qualifications-based selection process and found the consulting firm Foursquare Integrated Transportation Planning (ITP) to be the most qualified to assist CRCOG with the updated Bikeshare Feasibility Study. A motion was made by Patrice Carson from the Town of Bolton, seconded by Chris Edge from the Town of Berlin, to authorize CRCOG to enter into an agreement with FourSquare ITP for the Bike Share Feasibility Study update. This motion was passed unanimously.
- 8. Presentation: Greater Hartford Mobility Study** – Mr. Casey Hardin from TranSystems gave a brief presentation to update the Committee on the Greater Hartford Mobility Study. Mr. Hardin asked the Committee for feedback on local stakeholder groups and ways to enhance outreach outside the study core. Mr. Jon Colman from the

Town of Bloomfield suggested that coordination with the following groups would benefit the study: commercial realtor organizations, major employers, the trucking industry, chambers of commerce, town councils, economic development commissions, and the League of Women Voters. Mr. Hardin stated that the next steps for the study are to publish the existing conditions report; publish a need statement and universe of alternatives; roll out technical material to public; and identify potential focus groups.

9. Other Business – Dr. Lyle Wray mentioned to the Committee that there are two (2) upcoming webinars that may be of interest. The first is a Youth Auto Theft Webinar being held on Thursday, September 23rd, and the second is a discussion on the Hartford-Boston rail connection, which will be held in mid-November.

10. Adjourn – The meeting was adjourned at 1:05pm via a motion by Patrice Carson from the Town of Bolton, seconded by Chris Edge from the Town of Berlin.