

**CRCOG Cost Review Subcommittee Meeting**  
**Monday September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021**  
**11:30 AM**  
*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
Doug Wilson	East Hartford
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
Jeffrey Doolittle	South Windsor
Devin Cowperthwaite	Stafford
David Smith	Vernon
Greg Sommer	West Hartford
Derrick Gregor	Wethersfield
Adam Kessler	Windsor

<u>Guests</u>	
Gary Giroux	Cardinal Engineers
<i>Name Unknown</i>	CT-N
Dylan Reilly	Farmington

<u>Staff</u>	
Robert Aloise	CRCOG
Mike Cipriano	CRCOG
Ryan Faulkner	CRCOG
Roger Krahn	CRCOG
Sotoria Montanari	CRCOG
Cara Radzins	CRCOG
Karen Stewartson	CRCOG
Terri Thompson	CRCOG

**1. Roll Call** – Alphabetically by Member Municipality, then others. The meeting was called to order at 11:34am by the Chair, Jon Colman from the Town of Bloomfield.

**2. Public Forum** – No one chose to speak.

Andover / Avon / Berlin / Bloomfield / Bolton / Canton / Columbia / Coventry / East Granby / East Hartford / East Windsor / Ellington / Enfield / Farmington / Glastonbury / Granby / Hartford / Hebron / Manchester / Marlborough / Mansfield / New Britain / Newington / Plainville / Rocky Hill / Simsbury / Somers / South Windsor / Southington / Stafford / Suffield / Tolland / Vernon / West Hartford / Wethersfield / Willington / Windsor / Windsor Locks

**3. Adoption of Minutes from June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Cost Review Sub-Committee Meeting** – A motion was made by Patrice Carson from the Town of Bolton, seconded by Tim Webb from the Town of Ellington, to approve the minutes from the meeting on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021. This motion was passed unanimously with four (4) abstentions made by Larry Baril from the Town of Avon, Chris Edge from the Town of Berlin, Steve Sopelak from the Town of Rocky Hill, and David Smith from the Town of Vernon.

**4. LOTCIP Funding Increase Request: 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 5<sup>th</sup> and opened its public bid on September 8<sup>th</sup>. 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 Engineer's estimate and the lowest responsible bidder was due to several factors. She said 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. Ms. Montanari 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. Another factor for the increase Ms. Montanari discussed was the industry had recently seen considerable price increases across the board 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, would 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.

Mr. Devon Cowperthwaite from the Town of Stafford stated that the Town had been working on this project for some time; it is a very complex project; and residents look forward to its advancement. The Town discussed the pricing with all contractors. The increased pricing was due to the complexity of the risks associated with the project. Mr. Gary Giroux from Cardinal Engineers mentioned that contractors indicated they were very concerned about the risk factors tied to the unknown issues of the old dam underneath the bridge. He also mentioned that timing and higher material prices contributed to the cost increase. Mr. Dave Smith of Vernon asked if the bridge could be constructed within one season, resulting in a possible cost savings. Mr. Giroux indicated it is possible, however, there is a lot of preparation work that is required to be accomplished beforehand.

Mr. Jon Colman from the Town of Bloomfield asked if the increased pricing is considered a trend. It was noted that it is too soon to evaluate this. Mr. Doug Wilson from the Town of East Hartford inquired about the possible advantage of rebidding the project in the Spring after conducting more analysis to mitigate the risk factors. Mr. Cowperthwaite indicated much geotechnical analysis was already completed.

Mr. Peter Hughes from the Town of Marlborough asked if the town could request additional funds if the 10% contingencies were exhausted. Ms. Montanari indicated any additional funds needed would be the responsibility of the Town.

A motion was made by Peter Hughes from the Town of Marlborough seconded by Patrice Carson from the Town of Bolton, to approve the funding increase from \$2,601,000 to \$3,799,468. This motion was passed unanimously.

5. **2022 LOTCIP Project Solicitation and CTDOT Coordination Update** – Ms. Sotora Montanari gave an update on the 2022 LOTCIP Project Solicitation. She mentioned that a request for proposals (RFP) is anticipated to be distributed in late September, with project proposals due in January and project selection approval anticipated in May 2022. She referenced the Selection Policy in how a pavement structural improvement will be rated and the appropriateness of the pavement treatment. Ms. Montanari said CRCOG has worked closely with CTDOT to mitigate long-standing inefficiencies in the guidelines. To assist the municipalities with pavement treatment 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 pre-vetted by CTDOT. This opinion is optional and will be free to our communities. Additional details will be forthcoming with the RFP at the October meeting. In addition, CTDOT prefers a 20-year service life on all projects but 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.

Mr. Robert Aloise gave an update on LOTCIP coordination with CTDOT. Mr. Aloise mentioned that improving the efficiency of the LOTCIP program has been a great concern of the Committee. Mr. Aloise stated that CTDOT and CRCOG met over several months to address ongoing program challenges. He stated CRCOG reviewed and provided input to the draft CTDOT LOTCIP revised pavement treatment changes. He said projects are reviewed by multiple units at CTDOT, including Pavement, Rights of Way (ROW), and Traffic, and CRCOG scheduled meetings with each unit to review ways for the program to be more efficient. Mr. Aloise mentioned that some progress has been made on several issues. CRCOG staff is currently working with CTDOT to address the issues. Meeting details and progress made were listed in the memo distributed to Committee members. Specifically, Mr. Aloise mentioned that progress was made with the Pavement Unit, which agreed to fund a pre-vetted consultant to provide pavement treatment opinions during the pre-application process. He mentioned that CTDOT is revising the categories to four pavement categories and agreed to accept a 15-year service life for minor rehabilitation projects. Mr. Aloise also commented on progress made with the ROW Unit who agreed to early interaction and to providing timelines to municipalities. He also said CRCOG will be meeting with CTDOT Traffic to discuss processes.

Mr. Aloise stated that although significant progress has been with CTDOT, there were two (2) remaining issues that the CRCOG staff has not yet pursued, as they would require elevation of the issues to a higher level (at CTDOT or Legislature). The first issue pertains to eligibility, which if changed, would allow work on non-federal aid roadways. This would require legislative change, as current legislation requires that LOTCIP projects be STP-Urban eligible. Mr. Aloise explained that the reason for this is that STP-Urban funding is currently used by CTDOT, however, if LOTCIP funding was dissolved, the funding for LOTCIP projects would revert to STP-Urban funding.

The second higher-level issue is the elimination of CTDOT oversight, specifically allowing regional oversight only or no oversight (similar to Town Aid Road). Mr. Aloise stated this change would include COG's oversight or a pilot approach with CRCOG which would require CTDOT approval. Mr. Aloise said he would review what this change would entail in regard to resources and staffing. In summary, Mr. Aloise reiterated that CRCOG has made progress, and more information will be provided at future meetings as additional conversations are had.

Mr. Jon Colman from the Town of Bloomfield said that regarding eligibility, there was an agreement and understanding with CTDOT that if LOTCIP money was withdrawn, the region would get STP-Urban money back. He stated that since STP-Urban funding cannot be used on non-federal roadways, the region would lose this leverage if there were legislative changes. Mr. Colman suggested not to pursue eligibility changes too aggressively. Mr. Colman also stated that the region should pursue the elimination of some oversight. He suggested that CRCOG staff assess how they could manage LOTCIP on their own by increasing staff and/or consultant support. Mr. Colman was concerned that with anticipated decreases in CTDOT staffing along with multibillion dollars of COVID funding, LOTCIP could get lost along the way. Mr. Colman suggested that CRCOG and CTDOT should pursue a pilot program for regional oversight.

- 6. Other Business** – There was no other business discussed. The next Cost Review Sub-Committee meeting is scheduled for October 25, 2021 at 11:30am.
- 7. Adjourn** – The meeting was adjourned at 12:08 pm via a motion by Patrice Carson from the Town of Bolton seconded by David Smith from the Town of Vernon.