

Agenda Item Summary

To: Policy Board
From: Pauline Yoder, Chief Operating Officer
CC: Matthew Hart, Executive Director

Meeting Date: June 27, 2022

Subject: Approval of the Regional Services Grant Statement of Work and Spending Plan

Background: CRCOG receives the Regional Services Grant (RSG) from the state which is projected to be \$849,348.64 in FY 2022-2023. As part of receipt of that grant, CRCOG must submit a spending plan. For FY 2022-2023, Office of Policy and Management (OPM) requested that the spending plan be submitted in the form of a Statement of Work.

Benefit to Member Towns/CRCOG: FY 2022-2023 RSG spending plan encompasses all of the agency departments and objectives outlined in the FY 2022-2023 budget in order to allow the maximum flexibility for RSG expenditure.

Financial/Operational Impact: Submitting this spending plan will enable CRCOG to receive the RSG of \$849,348.64. CRCOG's RSG spending primarily focuses on personnel and salary costs.

Project Schedule: All RSG funding must be expended within the fiscal year.

Recommendation: Recommend the Policy Board approve the Regional Services Grant Statement of Work Spending Plan be submitted to OPM.

Attachments:

- RSG Statement of Work and Grant Award Budget

STATEMENT OF WORK AND GRANT AWARD BUDGET

PART I

NAME OF GRANTEE: **Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG)**

GRANT PROGRAM NAME: Regional Services Grant (RSG)

CONCISE GRANT PROGRAM SUMMARY (PROGRAM PURPOSE/INTENT/MISSION):

The RSG Program provides annual grant-in-aid to regional councils of governments (COGs).

OPM GRANT NUMBER: **(CRCOG): OPM Grant#: RSG 02301**

GRANT AWARD AMOUNT: **(CRCOG): Grant Amount: \$849,348.64**

INTRODUCTION:

This Statement of Work and Grant Award Budget relates to the requirements of Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) Sections 4-66k and 4-66r (2022 Supplement) and Section 8-31b. The Office of Policy and Management (OPM) is responsible for administering funds deposited to the Regional Planning Incentive Account, which is the source of RSG grant awards, and individual grant award amounts are determined through OPM's application of the statutory formula. Funds shall be used for planning purposes and to achieve efficiencies in the delivery of municipal services, without diminishing the quality of such services.

PART II – FY 23 RSG Budget Categories

(Note: The sum of **Budget Amounts** listed below must add up to the total **Grant Award Amount** shown in Part I)

1. Comprehensive Planning **Budget Amount: \$190,628.58**

Activities that support a **Connected Capitol Region**:

- Engage towns in discussion of transit-oriented development (TOD) opportunities linked to the **CTfastrak** and the **CTrail-Hartford Line** investments, review of the progress of these projects, and discussion of issues of common concern through convening the **CTrail-Hartford Line and CTfastrak Corridor Advisory Committee** (CAC). Staff will maintain a CAC presence on the CRCOG website, adding resource materials to the website as appropriate. Staff will also continue the newly formed effort to convene a **Transit-Oriented Development/Town Center Action Collaborative** to coordinate economic development efforts in the Capitol Region's transit corridors and centers of existing economic activity.

- Utilize statutorily required CRCOG reviews of municipal plans of conservation and development, zoning amendments, and subdivision proposals as an opportunity to provide comments on enhancements which could support implementation of TOD opportunities, increasing housing choice with a focus on housing affordability, and attention to complete streets per our regional Completes Streets policy.
- Engage local planning and economic development professionals and representatives on our Regional Planning Commission to participate in educational and roundtable discussions to foster a deeper understanding of planning issues, legislative directives, and new best practices.
- Support expansion of the regional pedestrian and bicycle network through planning and conducting **CRCOG Bike and Pedestrian Committee** meetings and conducting the **Bike/Ped Count and Active Transportation Audits** to monitor the current walkability/bikeability of count locations and identify trends in walking/biking in the region, and working to improve this process.
- Continue work on the **Active Transportation Implementation Grant** received through the Connecticut Department of Public Health State Physical Activity and Nutrition (SPAN) Grant and the Building Resilient Communities (BRIC) Grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control.
- Serve on the **Hartford Complete Streets Task Force**, a group which grew out of the national Mayors Complete Streets Challenge, and on the State of Connecticut **Vision Zero Subcommittees**.
- Serve on the Center for Latino Progress' Transport Hartford Academy Annual Summit Planning team.
- Continue to work toward a regional micromobility program by updating the 2014 Regional Bike Share Feasibility Study and exploding on the success of the scooter share program we helped establish in Hartford.
- Continue work on the East Coast Greenway Gap Closure Study to determine the final route for the last significant trail gaps in the CRCOG region. Gaps exist in Bloomfield, Hartford, and East Hartford and will also assist the Town of Simsbury in identifying the final preferred route.
- Monitor progress under **CRCOG Action Plan to Increase Walking and Walkability** and participate in Community of Practice conference calls to share regional progress and keep informed on best practices from across the country.
- Continue to evaluate LOTCIP selection criteria and process for integration of complete streets and participate in the review of LOTCIP transportation funding applications complete streets elements and exception form approvals.
- Continue to provide regional Geographic Information (GIS) services, including:
 - Maintain and update multiple GIS regional datasets including parcels, zoning, and multi-use trails.
 - Provide advanced mapping and analysis services for member municipalities and for all CRCOG departments.
- Continue collaboration with other GIS users through participation on the CT GIS User Network Steering Committee, GIS Data Acquisition Advocacy Committee, and statewide parcel working group.

Activities that support a **Competitive Capitol Region**:

- Implement the Metro Hartford Future Project (*Capitol Region Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy*).

- Obtain funding to update the Metro Hartford Future Project so that it better responds to impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding was sought in FY21 and staff will continue to monitor funding opportunities.
- Obtain Economic Development District designation from the federal Economic Development Administration.
- Continue the new Transit-Oriented Development study for the region. The study will look at the financial feasibility of individual sites in station areas along the CT**fastrak** and CT**Trail** corridors.
- Obtain funding to conduct a series of small-scale best practices studies in support of implementing the Metro Hartford Future Project. Studies include:
 - Workforce vacancy data systems best practices
 - Flexible funding for workforce vacancies best practices
 - Best practices in workforce talent development
 - Identification of five initiatives to accelerate economic growth and recovery in Connecticut
 - Best practices for engaging the philanthropic community in economic and infrastructure projects
- Provide staff assistance to the **CRCOG Foundation**. Implement Foundation priorities for FY 2022-2023, which may include collaboration on CEDS implementation, and continuation of Next Gen Economic Development workshop series.

Activities that Support a **Vibrant Capitol Region**:

- Help transit and rail corridors better link jobs, housing, and neighborhood revitalization by following up on implementation steps from the RPIP-funded study, **Next Steps in Engaging Anchor Institutions and Neighborhoods in Transit Oriented Development**.
- Carry out **MetroHartford Brownfields Program**.
 - Continue the Assessment component of this program.
 - Work toward completion of projects funded under the MetroHartford Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund and Subgrant Program.
- Carry out **Statutory Planning Responsibilities: Regional Plan of Conservation and Development** maintenance; input on land use, transit and active transportation components of the **Metropolitan Transportation Plan**; review of zoning and subdivision proposals along town boundaries, and municipal plans of conservation and development, for consistency with regional plans and policies, and the concerns of neighboring municipalities; review and support of municipal grant applications that advance regional plans and policies. Involve CRCOG Regional Planning Commission in the regional review process.
- Provide planning and implementation assistance in support of: transit-oriented development; expansion of housing opportunities; increased job and business opportunities; creation of bike and pedestrian friendly communities; green building and infrastructure; neighborhood planning and placemaking; preservation of working farms and key environmental resources; and other topics consistent with the principles of livable and sustainable communities.
- Upon request, meet with municipal planning and zoning commissions to discuss model land use regulation changes that support sustainable design and development, and expand housing opportunities.
- Help municipalities and developers provide for housing to meet the needs of all our citizens through responses to individual requests for information and assistance. Collaborate with other regional agencies, such as the Local Initiatives Support Corporation and Journey Home, on housing and neighborhood community development initiatives.

- Staff the CRCOG Regional Planning Commission and share with representatives from municipal planning and zoning commissions topics and strategies to create a more connected, competitive, vibrant and green Capitol Region.
- Serve on the ***Commission on Connecticut's Development and Future*** Model Code and Design Development Working Group that has been tasked with creating optional, model guidelines for buildings and context sensitive streets that municipalities can adopt statewide, as well as the Plan of Conversation and Development Working Group.
- Participate in the Lincoln Institute's Consortium for Scenario Planning.
- Continue utilizing advanced scenario planning software tools for use in a range of regional and corridor level planning initiatives.
- Work with CT APA, UCONN and other key partners on bringing an accredited urban planning degree program to Connecticut.

Activities that support a ***Green Capitol Region***:

- Engage member municipalities to implement mitigation activities identified in the Capitol Region Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan.
- Obtain funding to conduct an update of the Capitol Region Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan.
- Utilize advanced scenario planning tools to continue efforts to better integrate transportation, community development, municipal services, natural hazard mitigation and public safety activities within CRCOG that are related to building and maintaining livable and sustainable communities. Continue to build out the suite of scenario planning tools utilized by CRCOG staff.
- Collaborate with the Eastern Connecticut State University Institute for Sustainable Energy (ECSU-ISE) to encourage municipal participation in the Sustainable CT municipal certification program. Assist ECSU-ISE with evaluation/certification of municipal actions. Continue to host Sustainable CT Fellows at CRCOG to assist municipalities in gaining and maintaining Sustainable CT status.
- Represent CRCOG on the Central Connecticut Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC). This committee meets quarterly to maintain the adopted Coordinated Water System Plan.
- Represent CRCOG on the Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development Council (CTRC&D). Assist with Environmental Review Team analyses as appropriate.
- Use the regional statutory land-use review process to make recommendations to local planning and zoning commissions on actions which would advance regional sustainability. Provide CRCOG support to municipal open space grant applications.

Activities that support ***Transportation Planning***:

- Complete updated of Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Public Participation Plan. Work to understand and advance new projects under new IIJA funding sources including discretionary grant programs.
- Continue to update the web-based tool for mapping LOTCIP and TIP projects and work with CTDOT on their E-STIP project.
- Work to program LOTCIP funding, minimizing carryover amounts, and monitor legislation related to future LOTCIP bonding authorizations.
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- Continue to work with CTDOT and CRCOG municipalities to help streamline LOTCIP program guidelines. Manage on-call consultants to assist CRCOG with LOTCIP project submission reviews and program management.

- Continue to program and obligate federal STBG funding for municipally initiated projects. Work with CTDOT to ensure projects of regional significance are advanced through the STBG program and coordinated with the CTDOT Capital Plan.
- Work with municipalities, CTDOT, and FHWA to advance TA Set-Aside and CMAQ projects within the Capitol Region. Work with CTDOT on related solicitations as needed.
- Provide technical assistance to towns to solve traffic problems, resolve project funding problems, and/or mediate transportation related design issues with CTDOT.
- Continue to monitor regional traffic and congestion as part of a continuous Congestion Management Process.
- Continue to work with the City of Hartford, CTDOT, and other stakeholders to advance the Greater Hartford Mobility Study.
- Continue to be a resource to CTDOT as they work to implement the **CTfastrak** autonomous vehicle pilot project.
- Continue to support CTDOT and affected communities as it relates to **CTrail** Hartford Line Rail service, including future double-tracking, new stations, and increased service.
- In partnership with CTDOT and **CTtransit**, continue to advocate for implementation of recommendations from the Comprehensive Transit Service Analysis of **CTtransit**'s Hartford and New Britain/Bristol Divisions.
- Continue to work with CTDOT to select and prioritize projects for funding under the FTA 5310 program (Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program).
- FY2023 will not be an application year for the State Matching Grant Program for Demand Responsive Transportation (Municipal Grant Program). CRCOG will coordinate with CTDOT and recipients to ensure completion of necessary maintenance paperwork.
- Continue to conduct biannual utilization counts at the Region's commuter park and ride lots. Update related infographics.
- Continue to work with municipalities on updating the GIS system in the Region and collect updated municipal data layers for Web GIS Site.
- Continue to update the region's online interactive TIP and LOTCIP maps.
- Continue to work with municipalities and emergency responders to improve traffic incident management within the Hartford Urbanized Area, utilizing the TIM Coalition as a steering group for these efforts. Support Vision Zero and regional transportation safety strategies to reduce fatalities and serious injuries.
- Coordinating with Public Safety, continue to work to improve transportation-related response to emergencies.
- Continue working with CTDOT to initiate a transportation planning study from the FY2021 solicitation.
- Complete the Roundabout Screening Study, the Farmington Connectivity Study, the TOD Roles, Visioning, Viability & Tools Analysis study, and the Route 190 Corridor Study in Enfield.
- Continue work on East Coast Greenway Gap Closure Study and Route 20 Corridor Study in Windsor Locks.
- Build on completed Scenario Planning efforts, measuring transportation outcomes resulting from variable Land Use and Transportation Infrastructure scenarios.
- Continue to work with UConn's Traffic Signal Circuit Rider Program to advance traffic signal management initiatives throughout the region.
- Continue to participate in regional and project-specific traffic management discussions related to construction activities in the Greater Hartford Area.

Other activities as directed by CRCOG's Policy Board

2. Regional Services

Budget Amount: \$518,744.98

Municipal Services

- Continue to seek out new opportunities for inter-municipal service sharing and help identify funding sources to help implement these ventures.
- Work through the CRCOG Municipal Services Committee to help member municipalities learn about topics critical to effective local government operations through presentations and sharing of information among municipalities. Undertake periodic surveys, workshops and research projects on behalf of member municipalities. Attend conferences and workshops to educate staff on topics of importance.
- Develop additional offerings through CRCOG Municipal Services to include, but not limited to, additional software offerings on the Nutmeg Network. Respond to partnership opportunities as is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Municipal Services Department.
- Monitor the State of CT Property Assessment and Tax Collection Initiative and respond with appropriate resources.
- **Regional GIS.** Continue to support CRCOG's Regional Parcel Viewer and GIS portal and continue to make improvements to its data and functionality.
 - Continue adding automatic Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA) data processors in member municipalities.
 - Add town-specific data layers upon request.
 - Leverage ArcGIS Portal to enhance functionality and feedback capabilities.
 - Maintain and update regional GIS datasets such as land use and zoning.
- **Human Resources Initiative**
 - Expand upon the Interview Panel Database to include a larger participant base.
 - Launch into program the regional municipal job applicant portal for shared application across the region.
- Continue to convene the CRCOG Human Services Coordinating Council on issues of importance to municipal Human Services and Social Services Directors.
- **Regional Performance Incentive Program (RPIP) Grants**
 - Continue support of applications to this grant program on an annual basis by all CRCOG departments and members.
 - OPM announced applications for the RPIP grants on a rolling basis, with the first review planned for August 2022. CRCOG is currently conducting surveys and understanding from its various towns needs and thoughts regarding RPIP opportunities and will plan on applying for this grant.
- Expand on SCRCOG, WestCOG, NVCOG and SECCOG partnerships to promote CRCOG's statewide fee-for-service programs.
- **Crumbling Foundations**
 - Continue to administer the Governor's testing program for crumbling foundations
 - Continue to support municipalities affected by crumbling foundations as directed by the Ad-Hoc Working Committee and the Municipal Services Committee.
- Continue small town assistance meetings and expand opportunities for small towns.
- **Solid Waste Management**
 - Work with consultant to understand medium and long term options for the region regarding Solid Waste and where member towns can leverage CRCOG's assistance.
 - Continue to support Solid Waste Management and increase textile recycling, support Food Waste Collection and other Solid Waste related services.

CRCOG IT Services Cooperative

- Continue expansion of the Voice over Internet Protocol and Hosting Services membership.
- Work with the Novus to offer additional services over the Nutmeg Network that fit into the overall service sharing strategic plan developed by the Municipal Services Department.
- Continue to promote the Nutmeg Network for local government through legislative and other advocacy. Coordinate directly with other state-wide organizations (CCM, CTCMA and COST) to encourage effective implementation and sustainable funding of this important resource.
- Continue to administer the Regional Online Permitting System program. Expand the Regional Online Permitting System program options to interested municipalities.
- Promote the Cybersecurity Services available through Novus Insight and the Cybersecurity Model Polices. Continue to support the Cybersecurity Task Force and other vested interests to stay ahead of Cybersecurity risks and expand the offering of the Cybersecurity Program.
- Continue and complete the Cybersecurity for CEO and CAO webinar series

Capitol Region Purchasing Council

- Continue administration of the Capitol Region Purchasing Council (CRPC) Program, and expand program offerings, guided by the Municipal Services Strategic Plan.
- Promote membership with the CRPC to all municipalities and public agencies in the state. Attend procurement professional meetings to inform of CRPC activities and acquire knowledge to enhance cooperative opportunities through CRPC.
- Promote and administer the job order contracting program (ezIQC).
- Continue pursuit of state agency partnerships with our cooperative purchasing programs.
- Continue to monitor opportunities within the Natural Gas marketplace and evaluate potential opportunities for the consortium and if marketplace conditions are favorable, re-vitalize the consortium.

COVID-19 Recovery

- **Committee:** Continue to assist the RRSC and the working sub-committees
- **EDA Grant:** Execute the grant objectives and coordinate with appropriate stakeholders and partners.
- Continue to assist DEMHS Region 3 and the state in any of its COVID-19 Recovery efforts as needed and requested.

Other activities as directed by CRCOG's Policy Board

3. Municipal Technical Support

Budget Amount: \$139,975.08

- Continue to work through the Capitol Region Emergency Planning Council to help our municipalities with public safety and homeland security planning, training and exercising.
- Complete work on the FFY 2019 and FY 2020 Homeland Security, MMRS, and HAZMAT projects.
- Commence work on the FY 2021 and 2022 Homeland Security, MMRS, and HAZMAT projects.
- Complete work on our After Action Review of the region's response during the Covid pandemic and continue our Covid-19 response activities.

- Continue to manage Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) funding to include planning, training and exercising.
- Continue to administer CAPTAIN (CRCOG's mobile data communication system for police and fire users) and prepare for the transition off the system.
- Continue to act as the fiduciary agent for the HEARTBEAT Computer Assisted Dispatch and CT-CHIEF Records Management Projects as requested by our communities.
- Continue to enhance the Regional Emergency Support Plan and work with the State Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security to standardize across all regions.
- Continue to maintain the Get Ready Capitol Region citizen preparedness website and bolster the ambassador program.
- Continue work on the public safety centered service sharing projects.
- Continue to hold training sessions and conduct exercises.
- Review and update of regional plans (including the Training and Exercise Plan and Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan).
- Other activities as directed by CRCOG's Policy Board