



U.S. Department
of Transportation

Federal Transit Administration
Region I
55 Broadway Suite 920
Cambridge, MA 02142-1093
617-494-2055
617-494-2865 (fax)

Federal Highway Administration
CT Division
628-2 Hebron Ave., Suite 303
Glastonbury, CT 06033-5007
860-659-6703
860-659-6724 (fax)

February 1, 2022

Mr. Colman, Chairman
Capitol Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
241 Main Street
Hartford, CT 06106

Subject: Certification of the Transportation Planning Process
Hartford Transportation Management Area

Dear Mr. Colman:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) jointly certify the transportation planning process for the Hartford Transportation Management Area (TMA). The certification is based on the findings from the Federal Certification Review conducted virtually on October 25 and 26, 2021. The review looked at the cooperative planning process as conducted by the metropolitan planning organizations, state, and public transportation operators and the implementation of the planning requirements in 23 USC 134 and 49 USC 5303.

The final report is attached to this letter, documenting all findings including commendations and recommendations for continuing improvements and enhancements to the planning process.

The FHWA and FTA would like to thank all participants in this Certification Review. We commend the CRCOG for their conscientious attention to the transportation planning process and look forward to continuing to work with you and the other members of the MPO to enhance the transportation planning process in the Hartford TMA.

Sincerely,

Peter Butler
Regional Administrator
Federal Transit Administration - Region 1

For- Amy Jackson-Grove
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration - Connecticut

cc: Joseph Giuliatti, Commissioner - CTDOT
Kim Lesay, CTDOT
Robbin Cabelus, CTDOT
Maribeth Wojenski, CTDOT
Matthew Hart, CRCOG



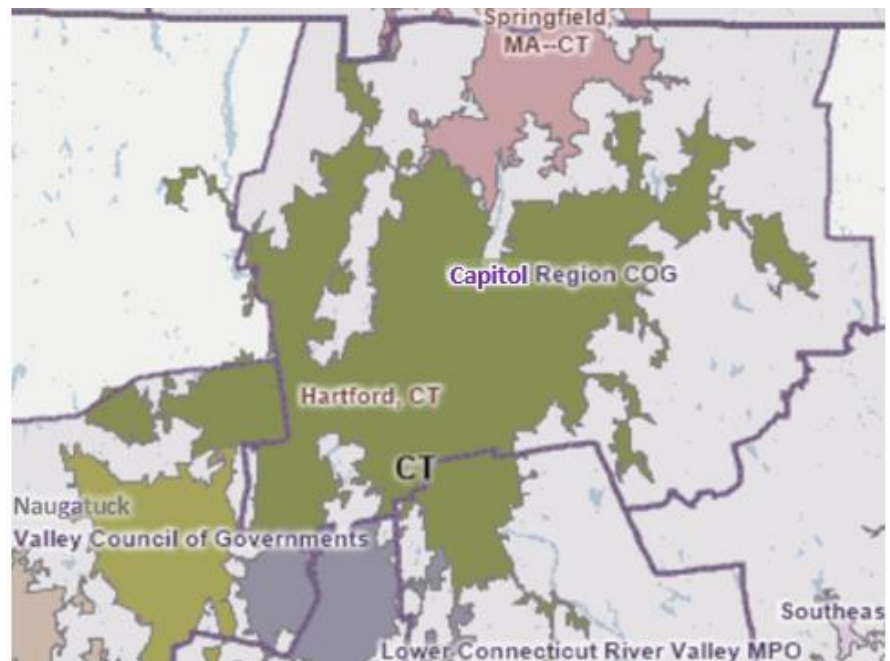
U.S. Department
of Transportation

Transportation Management Area Planning Certification Review

Federal Highway
Administration

Federal Transit
Administration

Hartford, Connecticut Transportation Management Area



February 1, 2022





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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conducted the certification review of the transportation planning process for the Hartford, Connecticut urbanized area through a series of virtual meetings held on October 25 and 26, 2021 in lieu of an on-site meeting. FHWA and FTA are required to jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process for each urbanized area over 200,000 in population at least every four years to determine if the process meets the Federal planning requirements.

1.1 Summary of Current Findings

As a result of this review, FHWA and FTA are certifying the transportation planning process conducted by Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) – the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and the region’s public transportation operators. There are also recommendations in this report that warrant close attention and follow-up, as well as areas the MPO is performing very well in that are to be commended.

Review Area	Recommendations
1. MPO Structure and Cooperation	CRCOG and CTDOT should work together to ensure the MPO’s approach to meeting the requirement for appropriate state transportation official(s) membership on the MPO board is well-defined and that the member is engaged. The MPO should consider amending their bylaws to better define the roles, responsibilities and voting structure of this official.
2. MPO Structure and Cooperation	CRCOG should consider assessing Transportation Committee membership to determine if additional organizations could benefit the metropolitan planning process. This committee offers a forum for cooperative planning and information sharing to inform decision making and would benefit from bringing together a range of stakeholders. CRCOG is encouraged to consider participants that can assist in creating a safe, multi-modal, equitable transportation system. In particular, an active representative of EJ communities and representation from of a range of public transportation operators in the region should be considered. Published documents such as the UPWP, and website materials should be updated to appropriately reflect membership.
3. TMA Coordination	Recommendation: As the 2020 Census results and TMA boundaries are refined in 2022, CRCOG, CTDOT and other TMA partners should work to assess any changes to the Hartford UZA and potential impacts to existing MOUs and agreements.



Review Area	Recommendations
4. Financial Planning	The TIP should be improved to include a clear comparison of anticipated revenues and programmed expenditures demonstrating financial constraint. Continued coordination with CTDOT will ensure reasonable funding program estimates. The TIP document should include a summary demonstrating financial constraint by year, by funding source.
5. Transit Planning	There are areas of potential collaboration between the MPO and regional providers of public transportation that the MPO can capitalize on such as CTDOT's Bus Shelter Program which will further improve transit planning and can result in better service for the public. Additionally, the MPO should work with WRTD in response to its request for support and more collaboration, including more frequent communication, which will benefit the region's transit services.
6. Transportation Improvement Program	CRCOG should coordinate with the CTDOT to understand the eSTIP platform that is under development and how it may or may not be compatible with the region's current processes for the TIP document and the on-line TIP visual map. Early coordination could identify opportunities to make the two systems more harmonious.
7. Transportation Improvement Program	The MPO should ensure the current TIP, including any adopted amendments, are readily available online shortly after endorsement. Although not ideal, a PDF of amendments can be posted to the CRCOG website after adoption, until the overall document is amended. Notations explaining this process can be made on CRCOG's website as well.
8. Transportation Improvement Program	CRCOG should assess if the identified equity assessment methodology from 2003 related to environmental justice target areas still fits the regional framework or if other equity-based models may better suit the TMA. This effort should be coordinated with the 2020 Census Data, anticipated for release in 2022. <i>(An additional recommendation is included in the Civil Rights section of this report).</i>
9. Public Participation	As the MPO updates its PPP, it should make a concerted effort to ensure there is a defined process to review the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies being used. The MPO is encouraged to develop measures of effectiveness that can help staff efficiently evaluate outreach efforts and better direct its limited resources. Community involvement in developing these effectiveness measures should be sought, as well as gathering feedback and ideas from targeted populations on ways to best communicate and share information with the public. Defining a regular review and update cycle is recommended.
10. Public Participation	To assist with public outreach and engagement, CRCOG should prepare a document that explains MPO functions and key transportation planning documents. CRCOG should translate this document in different languages, depending on regional language needs.



Review Area	Recommendations
11. Civil Rights (Title VI, EJ, LEP, ADA)	Title VI: The MPO should develop a new complaint form that will accurately capture all of the nondiscrimination statutes and protections. The new complaint form should include race, age, color, disability, national origin, and sex and be titled 'Title VI/Non-discrimination Complaint Form'.
12. Civil Rights (Title VI, EJ, LEP, ADA)	ADA: The MPO has been proactive in collaborating with CTDOT to educate municipalities on their responsibilities under ADA and Section 504 and should continue coordination with CTDOT on municipal self-evaluations and ADA Transition Plans. The MPO should send a summary of the Municipal ADA Assessments to FHWA/FTA on an annual basis.
13. Civil Rights (Title VI, EJ, LEP, ADA)	ADA: The MPO should assess how it communicates with disabled persons. Alternative formats such as Teletypewriter (TTY) and Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD) services that will allow hearing-impaired individuals to communicate through the telephone to receive information from the MPO should be considered. In addition, there are Relay call services available for those individuals who do not have access to the equipment noted above. As discussed at the certification review, CTDOT is willing to provide technical assistance on the alternative formats to communicate with people with disabilities, and their Office of Contract Compliance can also help CRCOG identify and connect with resources at the local, regional, and state level. To assist with communication, the region may also want to engage resources such as the Kennedy Center, American School for the Deaf, or Independent Living Centers, just to name a few.
14. Civil Rights (Title VI, EJ, LEP, ADA)	EJ: To be consistent with the Executive Order #12898 on EJ, the MPO will need to conduct a benefits and burden analysis on projects selected in the TIP and MTP. The data collection and analysis should be consistent in its consideration of all groups under Title VI, and specifically include White, Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska native, Asian and Hispanic or Latino and not limited to minority individuals. Title VI protected classes include persons of any race, color, and national origin. The MPO staff should become familiar with the requirements of the EJ Executive order and associated guidance. The benefits and burden analysis should be publicly vetted, and public input should be sought.
15. Civil Rights (Title VI, EJ, LEP, ADA)	Executive Orders 14008 and 13985: It is recommended that the MPO increase their awareness of the two Executive Orders, EO 14008 and EO 13985 , and prepare itself for the rollout by attending webinars and other virtual meetings as they become available. The MPO should strengthen outreach to Title VI, disability organizations and other community organizations focused on diverse populations. This will help to inform how the MPO can increase and improve communications with these organizations.



Review Area	Recommendations
16. Transportation Safety	CRCOG should work to develop processes to use and update the RTSP and the associated strategy implementation. This may include coordinating with the CTDOT Safety Office to discuss how the RTSP may be used to obtain funding to implement specific safety improvements identified within the RTSP.
17. Freight Planning	It is recommended that CRCOG work to update its freight stakeholder list, ensuring that distribution facilities such as Amazon Fulfillment Centers in the region are included.
18. Freight Planning	It is recommended that CRCOG continue coordination with CTDOT as it relates to updating the Statewide Freight Plan and work to ensure any strategies identified in the final State Plan, and in the regional Freight Fact Sheet, be incorporated into the MTP.
19. Freight Planning	The Region should monitor freight mobility and potential obstacles to economic growth and look for opportunities to work locally, regionally, and statewide in freight planning activities. The Region should especially consider the aspects of through-truck freight movements and freight parking.
20. Nonmotorized Planning / Livability	In support of the regional complete streets plan, policy and projects completed since the last certification review, CRCOG is encouraged to advance their online interactive map to show progress toward completing the regional complete streets network. This effort may prove to be a good performance management tool through the years, tracking progress and assisting in identifying systemwide gaps.
21. Performance Management	The TIP should include a description of how the anticipated effects the projects in the TIP are working toward achievement of the adopted performance targets and how these regional transportation investments align with targets. Consider summarizing the investments by category (e.g. bridges, pavements, congestion mitigation) as a way to analyze how these program investments meet the targets.
22. Congestion Management Process / Management and Operations	In the next CMP update, Hartford TMA COGs should collaborate on TMA-wide strategies that could benefit management and operations. One example includes park and ride lots that complement travel demand management and the transit system; the CMP currently only documents CRCOG's available and utilized parking spaces and amenities.
23. Congestion Management Process / Management and Operations	Coordination with CTDOT as it relates to ITS within the Hartford TMA is essential, ensuring that future opportunities are identified and planned for. The region should collaborate with CTDOT to determine how/if the CRCOG's 2015 ITS Strategic Plan should be updated to reflect the region's plans and implementation of strategies, or to determine if advancing the ITS goals and objectives through a statewide-ITS Strategic Plan is more appropriate. ITS Strategies should ensure they are consistent with the MTP and TIP.



Review Area	Recommendations
24. Congestion Management Process / Management and Operations	Coordinate with CTDOT to determine which (or both) of the regional ITS architectures should be maintained going forward. Clarify the roles and responsibility for maintaining and updating the regional ITS architecture(s).
25. Travel Demand Forecasting Model and Scenario Planning	CRCOG is encouraged to collaborate with CTDOT as it relates to the regional Travel Demand Model and the Statewide model to understand opportunities for coordination or potential growth areas. At a minimum, coordination could focus on future MTP updates, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions data from the Statewide model, or incorporation of new Census data in 2022.
26. Travel Demand Forecasting Model and Scenario Planning	CRCOG is encouraged to update other MPOs within the Hartford TMA about the scenario planning process and keep them informed as other regional advancements in scenario planning are made.

Review Area	Commendations
1. Transit Planning	The MPO continues to build off their previously completed studies to further improve transit in the region as shown through their focus on TOD and corridor studies. There is a clear emphasis on transit planning within the region and it is consistently integrated with other modes in planning studies such as CTDOT's current Greater Hartford Mobility Study.
2. Transportation Safety	CRCOG is commended for their multifaceted approach to including and addressing safety in transportation planning. Efforts range from the inclusion of "60 Seconds for Safety" on Transportation Committee meeting agendas and endorsing a resolution to support statewide safety efforts to leveraging other statewide resources and advancing a regional roundabout screening study. Through these efforts, municipalities become aware of municipal safety programs (e.g. rumble strips, crosswalk improvements, road diets, etc.), funding opportunities, and statewide initiatives to assist them in addressing safety at a local level.
3. Nonmotorized Planning / Livability	CRCOG is commended for its comprehensive approach to nonmotorized planning and livability both regionally and statewide. Their multi-pronged approach includes aspects beginning with studies and plan development and continuing through to the establishment of policy, education, and demonstrations projects.



Review Area	Commendations
4. Congestion Management Process / Management and Operations	The operations of the CROG's Greater Hartford TIM Coalition (GHTC) is commended as a best practice. In addition to coordinating with CTDOT and the T2 Center on training for TIM responders, the GHTC recently leveraged funding from various state and federal sources to produce a Connecticut Traffic Incident Scene Management Field Guide. This guide provides information and guidance to emergency responders on the management of traffic incidents to ensure a quick and safe clearance of roadways. The GHTC produces a newsletter as well to communicate ongoing TIM activities and updates.
5. Travel Demand Forecasting Model and Scenario Planning	CROG is commended for taking the initiative to understand how scenario planning can be implemented within the region and syncing it with the regional travel demand model which was calibrated during the process.

Details of the certification findings for each of the above items are contained in this report.



2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134(k) and 49 U.S.C. 5303(k), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must jointly certify the metropolitan transportation planning process in Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) at least every four years. A TMA is an urbanized area, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, with a population of over 200,000. After the 2010 Census, the Secretary of Transportation designated 183 TMAs – 179 urbanized areas over 200,000 in population plus four urbanized areas that received special designation. In general, the reviews consist of three primary activities: a site visit, a review of planning products (in advance of and during the site visit), and preparation of a Certification Review Report that summarizes the review and offers findings. The reviews focus on compliance with Federal regulations, challenges, successes, and experiences of the cooperative relationship between the MPO(s), the State DOT(s), and public transportation operator(s) in the conduct of the metropolitan transportation planning process. Joint FTA/FHWA Certification Review guidelines provide agency field reviewers with latitude and flexibility to tailor the review to reflect regional issues and needs. As a consequence, the scope and depth of the Certification Review reports will vary significantly.

The Certification Review process is only one of several methods used to assess the quality of a regional metropolitan transportation planning process, compliance with applicable statutes and regulations, and the level and type of technical assistance needed to enhance the effectiveness of the planning process. Other activities provide opportunities for this type of review and comment, including Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) approval, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), metropolitan and statewide Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) findings, Air-Quality (AQ) conformity determinations (in nonattainment and maintenance areas), as well as a range of other formal and less formal contact provide both FHWA/FTA an opportunity to comment on the planning process. The results of these other processes are considered in the Certification Review process.

While the Certification Review report itself may not fully document those many intermediate and ongoing checkpoints, the “findings” of Certification Review are, in fact, based upon the cumulative findings of the entire review effort.

The review process is individually tailored to focus on topics of significance in each metropolitan planning area. Federal reviewers prepare Certification Reports to document the results of the review process. The reports and final actions are the joint responsibility of the appropriate FHWA and FTA field offices, and their content will vary to reflect the planning process reviewed, whether or not they relate explicitly to formal “findings” of the review.



2.2 Purpose and Objective

Since the enactment of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991, the FHWA and FTA are required to jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process in all urbanized areas over 200,000 population to determine if the process meets the Federal planning requirements in 23 U.S.C. 134, 40 U.S.C. 5303, and 23 CFR 450. The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), extended the minimum allowable frequency of certification reviews to at least every four years.

The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) is the designated MPO for the Hartford urbanized area. The Naugatuck Valley MPO, the Lower Connecticut River Valley MPO, and the Northwest Hills COG serve small portions of the Hartford urbanized area as well. The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) is the responsible State agency and *CTtransit* is the primary public transportation operator within the TMA with the Greater Hartford Transit District and Windham Regional Transit District (WRTD) also providing transit services.

Municipalities that fall within the Hartford TMA are identified below by COG. Towns noted with an “*” do not have Hartford TMA areas.

CRCOG					Hartford TMA Municipalities in other COGs		
					NVCOG	RiverCOG	NHCOG
Andover	East Hartford	Manchester	South Windsor	Windsor			
Avon	East Windsor	Mansfield	Southington	Windsor Locks*	Bristol	Cromwell	Barkhamsted
Berlin	Ellington	Marlborough	Stafford		Plymouth	Haddam	Burlington
Bloomfield	Enfield*	New Britain	Suffield		Thomaston	Middletown	Litchfield
Bolton	Farmington	Newington	Tolland			Portland	New Hartford
Canton	Glastonbury	Plainville	Vernon				
Columbia*	Granby	Rocky Hill	West Hartford				
Coventry	Hartford	Simsbury	Wethersfield				
East Granby	Hebron	Somers	Willington				

* - Do not have Hartford TMA areas

Certification of the planning process is a prerequisite to the approval of Federal funding for transportation projects in such areas. The certification review is also an opportunity to provide assistance on new programs and to enhance the ability of the metropolitan transportation planning process to provide decision makers with the knowledge they need to make well-informed capital and operating investment decisions.



3.0 SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Review Process

Participants in the review included representatives of FHWA, FTA, CTDOT, CRCOG, public transit providers and other regional stakeholders. A full list of participants is included in Appendix A, along with copies of the agendas for virtual meetings which were held October 25 and 26, 2021. Opportunities for public comment were provided via a virtual meeting held on October 25, 2021 and input from MPO members was also solicited. Written comments were also accepted through email and regular mail submittals.

A desk audit of current documents and correspondence was completed prior to the virtual meetings. In addition to the formal review, routine oversight mechanisms provide a major source of information upon which to base the certification findings.

The certification review covers the transportation planning process conducted cooperatively by the MPO, State, and public transportation operators. Background information, current status, key findings, and recommendations are summarized in the body of the report for key topic areas. While many facets of the planning process were included in the desk audit, this report focuses on areas with notable findings. All subject areas not included in the report were found to be compliant with federal regulations.

3.2 Documents Reviewed

A number of documents, agreements, and materials (e.g. COG website, project solicitation materials) were consulted and assessed for conformity with federal regulations. The following list summarizes a few of the key MPO documents that were reviewed and considered during this certification review.

- MPO Agreements and By-Laws
- FY 2022-2023 Unified Planning Work Program
- MTP, 2019-2045 (April 2019)
- FFY 2021-2024 TIP and Self-Certification (October / November 2020)
- FFY2021-2024 TIP Equity Assessment (October 2020)
- Public Participation Plan (2017) and Assessment for FY2019, FY2020 and FY2021
- Title VI Complaint Process and Procedures
- Language Assistance Plan (July 2019)
- Atlas of Title VI and EJ Populations in the Capitol Region (June 2019)



- Congestion Management Process Report (November 2020)
- Complete Streets Policy and Plan
- CRCOG Freight Fact Sheet
- Scenario Planning Effort (Draft, January 2020) and Travel Demand Model Documentation
- CRCOG Studies (Corridor and Transit)



4.0 PROGRAM REVIEW

4.1 MPO Structure and Cooperation

4.1.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(d) and 23 CFR 450.314(a) state the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator shall cooperatively determine their mutual responsibilities in carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process. These responsibilities shall be clearly identified in written agreements among the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator serving the MPA.

As it relates to MPO composition, according to 23 CFR 450.310(d), the MPO Policy Board shall consist of (a) local elected officials, (b) officials of public agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation within the metropolitan area, including representation by providers of public transportation, (c) appropriate State transportation officials.

4.1.2 Current Status

The CROG Policy Board is designated as the MPO and regularly meets each month, acting on MPO items. In addition to the Chief Elected Official of each member town, CROG's MPO has representatives for the primary provider of fixed-route public transportation (operated by *CTtransit*) and the primary provider of paratransit service on the board (operated by the Greater Hartford Transit District).

Roles and responsibilities of the CROG MPO, CTDOT, and the public transportation operators are defined in the Prospectus, a written document within the MPO's approved Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for FY 2022 and FY 2023 which outlines the Federally required elements of transportation planning between the parties.

The region also has an active Transportation Committee and a Transportation Technical Committee. The Transportation Committee structure is briefly referenced in the introduction of the UPWP and on the CROG website. The Transportation Committee meets monthly to discuss and make recommendations to the MPO on transportation matters. The Transportation Technical Committee meets as needed to discuss detailed items and makes recommendations to the Transportation Committee.



4.1.3 Findings

Per 23 CFR 450.310(d) the MPO, in addition to Local Elected Officials and Officials of public agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation including public transportation providers, shall consist of appropriate state officials. CRCOG's bylaws, dated 2017, do not reference or document an "appropriate state official" on the MPO board and the MPO structure does not have a state transportation official on the board. During the review process CRCOG staff relayed they anticipate having an existing MPO member, who represents fixed-route public transportation, also serve as the state official.

CRCOG's Transportation Committee membership is defined on the website and in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) as having representatives from each town in the Capitol Region; however, other representatives, including the Connecticut Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice (CCEEJ) and Greater Hartford Transit District (GHTD), are not identified.

During the virtual site visit CRCOG communicated that the CCEEJ has not been regularly engaged in Transportation Committee meetings and they are reviewing if they are the most appropriate organization to serve the committee.

Recommendation: CRCOG and CTDOT should work together to ensure the MPO's approach to meeting the requirement for appropriate state transportation official(s) membership on the MPO board is well-defined and that the member is engaged. The MPO should consider amending their bylaws to better define the roles, responsibilities and voting structure of this official.

Recommendation: CRCOG should consider assessing Transportation Committee membership to determine if additional organizations could benefit the metropolitan planning process. This committee offers a forum for cooperative planning and information sharing to inform decision making and would benefit from bringing together a range of stakeholders. CRCOG is encouraged to consider participants that can assist in creating a safe, multi-modal, equitable transportation system. In particular, an active representative of EJ communities and representation from of a range of public transportation operators in the region should be considered. Published documents such as the UPWP, and website materials should be updated to appropriately reflect membership.

4.2 TMA Coordination

4.2.1 Regulatory

In accordance with 23 U.S.C. 134 and 23 CFR 450, MPOs must carry out a planning process that



is "continuing, cooperative and comprehensive" (3C). This includes establishing agreements to address the responsibilities and situations arising from there being more than one MPO in a metropolitan area.

More specifically, 23 CFR 450.314(e) states:

"If more than one MPO has been designated to serve an urbanized area there shall be a written agreement among the MPOs, the State(s), and the public transportation operator(s) describing how the metropolitan transportation planning processes will be coordinated to assure the development of consistent metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs across the MPA boundaries, particularly in cases in which a proposed transportation investment extends across the boundaries of more than one MPA. If any part of the urbanized area is a nonattainment or maintenance area, the agreement also shall include State and local air quality agencies. The metropolitan transportation planning processes for affected MPOs should, to the maximum extent possible, reflect coordinated data collection, analysis, and planning assumptions across the MPAs. Alternatively, a single metropolitan transportation plan and/or TIP for the entire urbanized area may be developed jointly by the MPOs in cooperation with their respective planning partners. Coordination efforts and outcomes shall be documented in subsequent transmittals of the UPWP and other planning products, including the metropolitan transportation plan and TIP, to the State(s), the FHWA, and the FTA."

In 2014, U.S. DOT outlined three Planning Emphasis Areas. These are not regulations, but rather topic areas that MPOs and State DOTs are encouraged to focus on when conducting their planning processes and developing their planning work programs. One of these Emphasis Areas is Models of Regional Planning Cooperation, which reads:

"Promote cooperation across MPO boundaries and across State boundaries where appropriate to ensure a regional approach to transportation planning. This is particularly important where more than one MPO or State serves an urbanized area or adjacent urbanized areas. The cooperation could occur through the metropolitan planning agreements that identify how the planning process and planning products will be coordinated, through the development of joint planning products, and/or by other locally determined means."

4.2.2 Current Status

The CRCOG, the Naugatuck Valley COG (NVCOG), the Lower Connecticut River Valley COG (RiverCOG) and the Northwest Hills COG (NHCOG), who all serve portions of the Hartford UZA, have a good history of collaboratively working together within the TMA. A few examples include the MPOs involvement on joint planning initiatives (e.g. preparing the Congestion



Management Process, the Route 229 Corridor Study), collaborating on Transportation Alternatives project selections, and yearly TMA coordination meetings. The 'Agreement Regarding Transportation Planning & Funding in the Hartford Urbanized Area' between CRCOG, NVCOG, RiverCOG, NHCOG, CTDOT, and transit providers was executed in 2018. CRCOG also works with CTDOT and transit providers within the TMA to program projects and coordinate efforts such as performance-based planning and programming.

CRCOG works collaboratively with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) in Massachusetts on few joint initiatives such as bicycle/scooter share, east-west rail planning, and scenario planning. Both CRCOG and PVPC have portions of the Springfield, MA – CT urbanized area and are party to the Memorandum of Understanding Concerning the Effect of the Urbanized Area Designations on the 2010 Census on Coordination among MPOs, States, and Public Transportation Operators, executed in 2020.

Beyond the Hartford and Springfield urbanized areas, CRCOG participates in the Metropolitan Area Planning (MAP) Forum which brings together MPOs from throughout the greater New York City area to work on shared issues.

4.2.3 Findings

Coordination within the Hartford TMA is occurring in a collaborative, effective manner and an agreement related to transportation planning and funding in the Hartford Urbanized Area has been executed. Coordination also extends across the state border where CRCOG collaborates with the PVPC, who represents the Springfield TMA, and the MAP Forum.

Recommendation: As the 2020 Census results and TMA boundaries are refined in 2022, CRCOG, CTDOT and other TMA partners should work to assess any changes to the Hartford UZA and potential impacts to existing MOUs and agreements.

4.3 Financial Planning

4.3.1 Regulatory Basis

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) (23 U.S.C. 134(j)(2)(B)) must include a financial plan that “indicates resources from public and private sources that are reasonably expected to be available to carry out the program” and demonstrates fiscal constraint for these documents. Estimates of funds available for use in the financial plan must be developed cooperatively by the MPO, public transportation operator(s), and the State (23 CFR 450.314). This cooperative process must be outlined in a written agreement that includes specific provisions for developing and sharing information related to



the development of financial plans that support the metropolitan transportation plan (23 CFR 450.314).” Additional requirements for financial plans are contained in 23 CFR 450.324(f)(11) for the MTP and 23 CFR 450.326(e–k), for the TIP.

4.3.2 Current Status

The TIP, covering FFY 2021–2024, was adopted in October 2020. Included in the TIP is a narrative that references CRCOG is dependent on CTDOT to provide estimates of federal funds available statewide, and for ensuring that a sufficient portion of those funds are allocated to CRCOG to cover the cost of their program of projects.

The MTP, adopted in April 2019, includes a financial plan that identifies regional investments and the revenue sources available to fund them. Support documentation is included in the MTP Appendix. CTDOT provides an estimate of anticipated federal funds over the 20–25 year time frame of the plan for the highway and transit programs. The MTP generally outlines anticipated FHWA formula funding for the region, based on population, and breaks out FTA formula programs within both the Hartford and Springfield UZAs. The MTP appendix goes into more detail on a formula for state highway funding allocations through 2045 that factors in volume/capacity ratios, vehicle miles traveled, roadway lane miles, and needs for major projects of statewide significance.

Fiscal / financial planning coordination is outlined in the UPWP Statement of Cooperative MPO / State / Transit Operator’s Planning Roles and Responsibilities statement found in the Appendix.

4.3.3 Findings

Fiscal constraint is a tool to establish a budget, prioritize within that budget, and then illustrate that the adopted MTP and TIP are realistic. Although CTDOT initiates and provides MPOs with financial data, enhanced collaboration between all parties, including transit providers, would benefit the financial planning process.

Although the TIP illustrates programmed funding by year for FHWA and FTA projects and references CTDOT’s analysis of the STIP demonstrates fiscal constraint, the TIP does not clearly demonstrate fiscal constraint.

Recommendation: The TIP should be improved to include a clear comparison of anticipated revenues and programmed expenditures demonstrating financial constraint. Continued coordination with CTDOT will ensure reasonable funding program estimates. The TIP document should include a summary demonstrating financial constraint by year, by funding source.



Available FHWA / FTA Resources:

- FHWA Resource Center Financial Planning Assistance – anticipated in Connecticut FFY2022

4.4 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

4.4.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(c), (h) & (i) and 23 CFR 450.324 set forth requirements for the development and content of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Among the requirements are that the MTP address at least a 20 year planning horizon and that it includes both long and short range strategies that lead to the development of an integrated and multi-modal system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in addressing current and future transportation demand.

The MTP is required to provide a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process. The plan needs to consider all applicable issues related to the transportation systems development, land use, employment, economic development, natural environment, and housing and community development.

23 CFR 450.324(c) requires the MPO to review and update the MTP at least every four years in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas and at least every 5 years in attainment areas to reflect current and forecasted transportation, population, land use, employment, congestion, and economic conditions and trends.

Under 23 CFR 450.324(f), the MTP is required, at a minimum, to consider the following:

- Projected transportation demand
- Existing and proposed transportation facilities
- Operational and management strategies
- Congestion management process
- Capital investment and strategies to preserve transportation infrastructure and provide for multimodal capacity
- Design concept and design scope descriptions of proposed transportation facilities
- Potential environmental mitigation activities
- Pedestrian walkway and bicycle transportation facilities
- Transportation and transit enhancements
- A financial plan



4.4.2 Current Status

The Capitol Region Metropolitan Transportation Plan (covering the years 2019-2045) was adopted in April 2019.

4.4.3 Findings

The MTP includes a variety of multimodal short and long-range projects and strategies, including bicycle and pedestrian walkway facilities, transportation alternatives, and associated transit improvements. Projected population and employment are included in the MTP and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) projections to 2045 are estimated based on Connecticut Department of Labor information for population and CROCOG's travel demand model. The MTP also identifies a few environmental considerations and references work completed under the Capitol Region Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (2019-2024) which identifies mitigation actions that address transportation infrastructure.

Recommendations related to the MTP are included in Freight Planning and Performance Management sections.

4.5 Transit Planning

4.5.1 Regulatory Basis

49 U.S.C. 5303 and 23 U.S.C. 134 require the transportation planning process in metropolitan areas to consider all modes of travel in the development of their plans and programs. Federal regulations cited in 23 CFR 450.314 state that the MPO in cooperation with the State and operators of publicly owned transit services shall be responsible for carrying out the transportation planning process.

4.5.2 Current Status

CROCOG continues to build off previously completed transit studies such as the 2017 Hartford Comprehensive Service Analysis (CSA) and 2016 Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Anchor institutions Study. This has resulted in more focused follow-on studies such as the Metro Hartford Rapid Routes Study of transit priority corridors that is currently underway and a second 2019 TOD Anchor Institutions Study. The latter is the result of a recommendation from the previous federal certification review. Transit remains a key component of the Hartford transportation network with CROCOG assisting multiple partners in work to enhance their service or amenities. This coordinated and collaborative approach is demonstrated, for instance, through both a working group, that includes the municipalities of Hartford, East Hartford and



CTDOT, and a technical advisory group, that includes additional partners beyond the working group, which are meeting to support the Rapid Routes study.

As mentioned, there are number of ongoing efforts to further enhance the existing transit network. CRCOG demonstrates a continued focus on TOD, completing multiple studies and currently has another scenario planning exercise underway that will focus on specific sites accompanied by a financial assessment in order to better assist towns in attracting developers. The scenario planning work has shown some of the limitations that TOD may have in addressing congestion due to the particular growth and development patterns in the region. Additionally, localities within the region are concerned about consolidating all their development in a single area due to the need to grow and spread an evenly distributed tax base. Despite these challenges CRCOG is committed to championing TOD within the MPO's boundaries. The understanding of the type and magnitude of potential outcomes from implementing TOD based on the scenario planning work can help the MPO better focus its efforts.

The MPO's focus on transit collaboration is principally with the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), *CTtransit* and the Greater Hartford Transit District (GHTD). Additionally, the Windham Regional Transit District (WRTD) provides some limited service within the MPO's boundaries. Each of these transit partners expressed a strong relationship between CRCOG and the provider. *CTtransit* specifically pointed out the role the MPO plays in distributing information to the public on any significant changes in service and upcoming projects. As mentioned above, the MPO is also actively working with CTDOT, *CTtransit*, and others on the Metro Hartford Rapid Routes study. Prior to initiating the study, the MPO also ensured that the findings of the CSA were still relevant, revisiting the ridership figures after the COVID-19 pandemic to check whether these routes were still the correct routes to focus on in the new study given the overall changes on transit due the pandemic. So far, the study's preliminary analysis has identified some key strategies to be considered for implementation including transit signal priority and bus stop optimization which will only strengthen the level of transit service available to the region.

A previous and promising initiative between GHTD and the MPO to develop a regional program for bus shelters has not taken off due to a lack of funding and a more piecemeal approach is being followed instead. Discussion during the site visit also included CTDOT's ongoing Bus Shelter Design project which mirrors a lot of the efforts from the original GHTD and MPO project. This presents an opportunity for the MPO to further strengthens its collaboration with CTDOT on a major transit project set to benefit the region. WRTD's staff, who is also working on bus stop improvements, were interested in a stronger connection with the MPO due to their unfamiliarity with the region and identified several areas of concerns that also serve as possible



areas for collaboration, such as their updates to previous corridor studies and bus shelter amenities.

4.5.3 Findings

Commendation: The MPO continues to build off their previously completed studies to further improve transit in the region as shown through their focus on TOD and corridor studies. There is a clear emphasis on transit planning within the region and it is consistently integrated with other modes in planning studies such as CTDOT's current Greater Hartford Mobility Study.

Recommendation: There are areas of potential collaboration between the MPO and regional providers of public transportation that the MPO can capitalize on such as CTDOT's Bus Shelter Program which will further improve transit planning and can result in better service for the public. Additionally, the MPO should work with WRTD in response to its request for support and more collaboration, including more frequent communication, which will benefit the region's transit services.

4.6 Transportation Improvement Program

4.6.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(c),(h) & (j) set forth requirements for the MPO to cooperatively develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Under 23 CFR 450.326, the TIP must meet the following requirements:

- Must cover at least a four-year horizon and be updated at least every four years.
- Surface transportation projects funded under Title 23 U.S.C. or Title 49 U.S.C., except as noted in the regulations, are required to be included in the TIP.
- List project description, cost, funding source, and identification of the agency responsible for carrying out each project.
- Projects need to be consistent with the adopted MTP.
- Must be fiscally constrained.
- The MPO must provide all interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed TIP.
- Include a description of the anticipated effect of the TIP toward achieving the performance targets identified in the MTP, linking investment priorities to those targets.
- Established criteria and procedures for amending the TIP



4.6.2 Current Status

The current CRCOG TIP is the FFY 2021-2024 TIP, adopted in October 2020. The TIP document is on the region's website along with an interactive map. CTDOT has been working on developing an electronic STIP (e-STIP) which is anticipated to be coordinated with MPOs in late 2021/early 2022.

The region also published an Equity Assessment in coordination with the FFY 2021-2024 TIP. CRCOG's Equity Assessment defines large concentrations of low-income or minority populations, referred to as primary and secondary target areas, based on methodology that CRCOG developed in cooperation with a regional Environmental Justice Advisory Board in 2003. The methodology has been carried forward during each TIP update or project solicitation with slight adjustments to accommodate the 2010 Census and American Community Survey (ACS) estimates.

TIP amendments, following approval by the MPO, are tracked in a CRCOG database and get posted to the region's website every few months, depending on the volume of amendments processed. Amendments are not posted regularly after adoption.

CRCOG also publishes an annual list of projects for which Federal funds have been obligated in the preceding year and posts it on-line.

CRCOG has formal project selection criteria for the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ), Transportation Alternatives (TA) and Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) (state funded) programs. Projects funded under the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program are coordinated between CTDOT and CRCOG on a yearly basis.

4.6.3 Findings

Recommendation: CRCOG should coordinate with the CTDOT to understand the eSTIP platform that is under development and how it may or may not be compatible with the region's current processes for the TIP document and the on-line TIP visual map. Early coordination could identify opportunities to make the two systems more harmonious.

Recommendation: The MPO should ensure the current TIP, including any adopted amendments, are readily available online shortly after endorsement. Although not ideal, a PDF of amendments can be posted to the CRCOG website after adoption, until the overall document is amended. Notations explaining this process can be made on CRCOG's website as well.

Recommendation: CRCOG should assess if the identified equity assessment methodology from 2003 related to environmental justice target areas still fits the regional framework or if other



equity-based models may better suit the TMA. This effort should be coordinated with the 2020 Census Data, anticipated for release in 2022. *(An additional recommendation is included in the Civil Rights section of this report).*

Enhancements to better illustrate fiscal constraint could benefit regional stakeholders and specific recommendations are included in the Financial Planning section of this report.

Available FHWA / FTA Resources:

- FHWA/FTA Transportation Planning Capacity Building, Transportation Equity website: https://www.planning.dot.gov/planning/topic_transportationequity.aspx
- Addressing Changing Demographics in Environmental Justice Analysis, State of Practice; FHWA, February 2019: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/publications/chng_de_mo/index.cfm

4.7 Public Participation

4.7.1 Regulatory Basis

Sections 134(i)(5), 134(j)(1)(B) of Title 23 and Section 5303(i)(5) and 5303(j)(1)(B) of Title 49, require an MPO to provide adequate opportunity for the public to participate in and comment on the products and planning processes of the MPO. The requirements for public involvement are detailed in 23 CFR 450.316(a) and (b), which require the MPO to develop and use a documented participation plan that includes explicit procedures and strategies to include the public and other interested parties in the transportation planning process.

Specific requirements include giving adequate and timely notice of opportunities to participate in or comment on transportation issues and processes, employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, making public information readily available in electronically accessible formats and means such as the world wide web, holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times, demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input, and periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the participation plan.

4.7.2 Current Status

CRCOG's current Public Participation Plan (PPP) was adopted in 2017. It identifies CRCOG's approach and strategies for conducting public participation, including outreach to underserved



populations. It also provides for an annual review of the effectiveness of the public participation. The PPP outlines a number of methods that could be used to conduct this review (e.g. focus groups, polls) although recent evaluations that were documented and shared with the Federal Team consist primarily of staff assessment of the prior year's outreach efforts. While the PPP currently calls for annual assessments, CRCOG staff reported that they did not feel the effort required to conduct those assessments was yielding sufficient benefits to the public participation process and intend to transition to less frequent evaluations in future PPPs. The current UPWP includes work to develop a new PPP which is anticipated to be completed in calendar year 2022.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, a significant transition has occurred from in-person outreach to conducting primarily virtual meetings and online public outreach. CRCOG confirmed that these activities are consistent with its existing PPP, but the new PPP should more directly address how the MPO plans to use various virtual engagement strategies to meet its public participation objectives and ensure opportunities for the public to be engaged are available to all populations. Staff reported that standing meetings such as the Transportation Committee have seen higher participation levels since moving to a virtual environment. Other activities such as corridor studies have utilized virtual meeting rooms-webpages that include information, comments forms, recorded presentations and so forth. CRCOG has also continued using public transportation providers to reach out to riders for input by providing posters on buses that include QR codes for a relevant survey, for example. Such posters are provided in both English and Spanish. CRCOG has also recently further developed its social media usage including Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter with a new staff person managing this aspect of its outreach.

CRCOG had historically prepared a document summarizing what an MPO is along with key transportation documents which was also published in another language. During the virtual on-site review, the region acknowledged this document was useful and needed to be updated.

4.7.3 Findings

The CRCOG PPP is due for an update, and the MPO has included funds for the effort in the current UPWP. The new PPP should include provisions accounting for the changes in public engagement practices that have occurred due to new technologies as well as the COVID-19 pandemic, including considerations such as hybrid meetings and other new approaches.

Recommendation: As the MPO updates its PPP, it should make a concerted effort to ensure there is a defined process to review the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies being used. The MPO is encouraged to develop measures of effectiveness that can help staff efficiently evaluate outreach efforts and better direct its limited resources. Community involvement in developing these effectiveness measures should be sought, as well as gathering



feedback and ideas from targeted populations on ways to best communicate and share information with the public. Defining a regular review and update cycle is recommended.

Recommendation: To assist with public outreach and engagement, CROCOG should prepare a document that explains MPO functions and key transportation planning documents. CROCOG should translate this document in different languages, depending on regional language needs.

Available FHWA / FTA Resources:

- Broward MPO (Florida) Public Participation: <https://browardmpo.org/core-products/public-participation-plan-ppp>
- The Innovative MPO - Smart Planning, Strong Communities <https://t4america.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/The-Innovative-MPO.pdf>
- Public Involvement Techniques for Transportation Decisionmaking (FHWA) https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/public_involvement/publications/pi_techniques/fhwahep15044.pdf
- Case studies and examples: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/public_involvement/

4.8 Civil Rights (Title VI, EJ, LEP, ADA)

4.8.1 Regulatory Basis

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibits discrimination based upon race, color, and national origin. Specifically, 42 U.S.C. 2000d states that “No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” In addition to Title VI, there are other Nondiscrimination statutes that afford legal protection. These statutes include the following: Section 162 (a) of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973 (23 U.S.C. 324), Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. ADA specifies that programs and activities funded with Federal dollars are prohibited from discrimination based on disability.

Executive Order #12898 (Environmental Justice) directs federal agencies to develop strategies to address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs on minority and low-income populations. In compliance with this Executive Order, USDOT and FHWA issued orders to establish policies and procedures for addressing environmental justice in minority and low-income populations. The planning regulations, at 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(vii), require that the needs of those “traditionally underserved” by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and/or minority households, be sought out and considered.



Executive Order # 13166 (Limited-English-Proficiency) requires agencies to ensure that limited English proficiency persons are able to meaningfully access the services provided consistent with and without unduly burdening the fundamental mission of each federal agency.

Under the ADA (28 CFR § 35.105) and Section 504 (49 CFR § 27.11), public entities must ensure that all programs, activities, and services are examined to identify barriers to access for persons with disabilities. Every State and municipality is required by Section 504 and by the ADA, to have completed a self-evaluation and an ADA transition plan. The self-evaluation is an inventory of an entity's facilities (e.g. sidewalks, curb ramps, detectable warnings) that identifies barriers in policies (e.g., public meetings in inaccessible locations), programs (e.g., sidewalks and curb ramps— both considered to be “programs”—that are inaccessible to persons with disabilities, or, missing where they should have been constructed) and other activities and services that prevent access for persons with disabilities.

An ADA transition plan is the document that identifies the steps necessary to complete the changes identified in the entity's self-evaluation to make its programs, activities, and services accessible; it describes in detail the actions the public entity will take to make facilities accessible and a prioritized schedule for making the improvements. All public entities with 50 or more employees (agency-wide) are required to develop a transition plan. Whereas agencies with less than 50 employees must develop a “Program Access Plan,” that describes how it will address non-compliant facilities.

Executive Order (EO) 14008, “Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad” created a government-wide “Justice40 Initiative” that aims to deliver 40 percent of the overall benefits of relevant federal investments to disadvantaged communities. The US Department of Transportation (USDOT) will develop a methodology to identify disadvantaged communities and benefits for Justice40-covered programs, that will be consistent with guidance from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and relevant statutory authorities.

The Justice40 Initiative is also aligned with the goals of EO 13985, “Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government,” and will be implemented as part of the USDOT's broader equity agenda.

4.8.2 Current Status

Title VI – CRCOG's Title VI Complaint Process and Procedures clearly discusses the process to file a Title VI Complaint. In addition, the form provides an online link to the FHWA complaint manual. However, the form does not describe the process to file a complaint on the basis of age, sex, and disability.



ADA - CRCOG has been collaborating with CTDOT's ADA Coordinating Engineer who presented to municipal officials in September 2020 on ADA Planning Initiatives. CRCOG also shares training opportunities and compliance information such as ADA Self-Evaluations and Transition Plans within the MPO.

Environmental Justice - The Executive Order #12898 of February 11, 1994 focuses on recipients of federal financial assistance to address Environmental Justice in minority populations and low-income populations.

The MPO prepared an Equity Assessment of the FY 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The report concluded that the MPO did not find any bias in the distribution of transportation funds in the TIP. However, the basic tenets of EJ is a burdens and benefits analysis. The Review Team understands that there are projects programmed in the MPO's TIP and MTP that were selected by CTDOT, and not directly by the MPO. However, for projects selected by the MPO, an EJ analysis to examine the burdens and benefits of the transportation projects was not conducted in either the TIP or MTP.

4.8.3 Findings

Title VI Recommendation: The MPO should develop a new complaint form that will accurately capture all of the nondiscrimination statutes and protections. The new complaint form should include race, age, color, disability, national origin, and sex and be titled 'Title VI/Non-discrimination Complaint Form'.

ADA Recommendation: The MPO has been proactive in collaborating with CTDOT to educate municipalities on their responsibilities under ADA and Section 504 and should continue coordination with CTDOT on municipal self-evaluations and ADA Transition Plans. The MPO should send a summary of the Municipal ADA Assessments to FHWA/FTA on an annual basis.

ADA Recommendation: The MPO should assess how it communicates with disabled persons. Alternative formats such as Teletypewriter (TTY) and Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD) services that will allow hearing-impaired individuals to communicate through the telephone to receive information from the MPO should be considered. In addition, there are Relay call services available for those individuals who do not have access to the equipment noted above. As discussed at the certification review, CTDOT is willing to provide technical assistance on the alternative formats to communicate with people with disabilities, and their Office of Contract Compliance can also help CRCOG identify and connect with resources at the local, regional, and state level. To assist with communication, the region may also want to engage resources such as the Kennedy Center, American School for the Deaf, or Independent Living Centers, just to name a few.



EJ Recommendation: To be consistent with the Executive Order #12898 on EJ, the MPO will need to conduct a benefits and burden analysis on projects selected in the TIP and MTP. The data collection and analysis should be consistent in its consideration of all groups under Title VI, and specifically include White, Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska native, Asian and Hispanic or Latino and not limited to minority individuals. Title VI protected classes include persons of any race, color, and national origin. The MPO staff should become familiar with the requirements of the EJ Executive order and associated guidance. The benefits and burden analysis should be publicly vetted, and public input should be sought.

Executive Orders 14008 and 13985 Recommendation: It is recommended that the MPO increase their awareness of the two Executive Orders, [EO 14008](#) and [EO 13985](#), and prepare itself for the rollout by attending webinars and other virtual meetings as they become available. The MPO should strengthen outreach to Title VI, disability organizations and other community organizations focused on diverse populations. This will help to inform how the MPO can increase and improve communications with these organizations.

Available FHWA / FTA Resources:

- Web-based Training: Course Number FHWA-NHI-142074, 'Fundamentals of Environmental Justice' https://www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/course-search?course_no=142074
- Environmental Justice Reference Guide https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/publications/reference_guide_2015/section00.cfm

4.9 Transportation Safety

4.9.1 Regulatory Basis

The FAST Act requires MPOs to consider safety as one of ten planning factors. As stated in 23 CFR 450.306(a)(2), the planning process needs to consider and implement projects, strategies, and services that will increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.

In addition, SAFETEA-LU established a core safety program called the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) (23 U.S.C. 148), which introduced a mandate for states to have Strategic Highway Safety Plans (SHSPs). 23 CFR 450.306(d) requires the metropolitan transportation planning process should be consistent with the SHSP, and other transit safety and security planning.



4.9.2 Current Status

CTDOT, in close coordination with the CRCOG and associated municipalities, recently completed the development of a Regional Transportation Safety Plan (RTSP). CRCOG indicated the RTSP development provided an excellent opportunity to work closely with municipal and law enforcement professionals on identifying safety issues and specific locations for safety improvements. The RTSP is a resource that municipalities use to support their safety-related actions and their decisions on project locations, to submit applications to the CRCOG for funding. In addition to considering safety benefits when selecting projects to fund (e.g., under the LOTCIP Program), CRCOG specifically references the RTSP when soliciting corridor studies.

CRCOG's Policy Board adopted a resolution of support for pedestrian safety laws that were enacted by the state, and CRCOG commits a '60 Seconds for Safety' Transportation Committee agenda item each month. Furthermore, the CRCOG has been listening into the state's new Vision Zero Council, which has been tasked with developing a statewide policy to eliminate transportation-related fatalities and severe injuries.

CRCOG works with the Technology Transfer (T2) Center's Safety Circuit Rider program to present and discuss local crash data with municipalities to continue to identify and address safety issues. CRCOG staff participates as a member of the T2 Safety Circuit Rider Advisory Committee.

CRCOG has begun advancing a roundabout screening study which will assist in determining locations within the Capitol Region where it is feasible to convert existing intersections to modern, single-lane roundabouts in an effort to improve safety and traffic operations.

4.9.3 Findings

Commendation: CRCOG is commended for their multifaceted approach to including and addressing safety in transportation planning. Efforts range from the inclusion of "60 Seconds for Safety" on Transportation Committee meeting agendas and endorsing a resolution to support statewide safety efforts to leveraging other statewide resources and advancing a regional roundabout screening study. Through these efforts, municipalities become aware of municipal safety programs (e.g. rumble strips, crosswalk improvements, road diets, etc.), funding opportunities, and statewide initiatives to assist them in addressing safety at a local level.

Recommendation: CRCOG should work to develop processes to use and update the RTSP and the associated strategy implementation. This may include coordinating with the CTDOT Safety Office to discuss how the RTSP may be used to obtain funding to implement specific safety improvements identified within the RTSP.



4.10 Freight Planning

4.10.1 Regulatory Basis

The MAP-21 established in 23 U.S.C. 167 a policy to improve the condition and performance of the national freight network and achieve goals related to economic competitiveness and efficiency; congestion; productivity; safety, security, and resilience of freight movement; infrastructure condition; use of advanced technology; performance, innovation, competition, and accountability, while reducing environmental impacts.

In addition, 23 U.S.C. 134 and 23 CFR 450.306 specifically identify the need to address freight movement as part of the metropolitan transportation planning process.

4.10.2 Current Status

There is a wide variety of freight modes in operation in the region. The MPO is supporting the CTDOT in their production of a state freight plan and has participated in stakeholder interviews. CRCOG coordinates well with surrounding MPOs and has discussions about freight planning when they meet as a TMA once a year. The MPO prepared a Freight Fact Sheet in 2020, summarizing the current state of freight in the region, limitations and challenges, and potential ways to address freight moving forward.

The region reports involvement with the Metropolitan Area Planning (MAP) Forum based on the heavy truck freight traffic generated in NY and NJ that travels I-91 and Bradley International Airport.

4.10.3 Findings

Recommendation: It is recommended that CRCOG work to update its freight stakeholder list, ensuring that distribution facilities such as Amazon Fulfillment Centers in the region are included.

Recommendation: It is recommended that CRCOG continue coordination with CTDOT as it relates to updating the Statewide Freight Plan and work to ensure any strategies identified in the final State Plan, and in the regional Freight Fact Sheet, be incorporated into the MTP.

Recommendation: The Region should monitor freight mobility and potential obstacles to economic growth and look for opportunities to work locally, regionally, and statewide in freight planning activities. The Region should especially consider the aspects of through-truck freight movements and freight parking.



4.11 Nonmotorized Planning / Livability

4.11.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 217(g) states that bicyclists and pedestrians shall be given due consideration in the comprehensive transportation plans developed by each MPO under 23 U.S.C. 134. Bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways shall be considered, where appropriate, in conjunction with all new construction and reconstruction of transportation facilities.

23 CFR 450.306 sets forth the requirement that the scope of the metropolitan planning process "will increase the safety for motorized and non-motorized users; increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users; and protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life."

4.11.2 Current Status

CRCOG has a Complete Streets Plan (updated in June 2021) and, as a companion to the plan, adopted a regional Complete Streets Policy in January 2020. A Complete Streets Compliance Form is included within the Policy, requiring municipalities to submit any exemption information (e.g. existing parallel facility, physical constraint material) with applications for project funding. The region also prepared a Community Quick-Builds for Complete Streets document in February 2020 and works with other statewide partners (e.g. the CT Department of Public Health and other Connecticut COGs) to develop education and project implementation / demonstration opportunities.

The region staffs and manages a Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee which is a subcommittee of the CRCOG Transportation Committee and meets quarterly.

The MTP references CRCOG developing an online interactive map to show progress toward completing the regional complete streets network. This effort has yet to be initiated.

The region continues to advance studies in partnership with their member municipalities which address connectivity, livability and bicycle / pedestrian mobility. Studies range from corridor and gap closure studies to Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and regional bikeshare plans.

4.11.3 Findings

Commendation: CRCOG is commended for its comprehensive approach to nonmotorized planning and livability both regionally and statewide. Their multi-pronged approach includes



aspects beginning with studies and plan development and continuing through to the establishment of policy, education, and demonstrations projects.

Recommendation: In support of the regional complete streets plan, policy and projects completed since the last certification review, CRCOG is encouraged to advance their online interactive map to show progress toward completing the regional complete streets network. This effort may prove to be a good performance management tool through the years, tracking progress and assisting in identifying systemwide gaps.

4.12 Performance Management

4.12.1 Regulatory Basis

The following citations pertain to requirements for MPOs under performance management:

23 CFR 450.306(d) states that each MPO shall establish performance targets to support the national goals and track progress towards the attainment of critical outcomes. Each MPO shall coordinate with the relevant State to ensure consistency, to the maximum extent practicable, and establish performance targets not later than 180 days after the State or provider of public transportation establishes its performance targets. The selection of performance targets that address performance measures described in 49 U.S.C. 5326(c) and 49 U.S.C. 5329(d) shall be coordinated to the maximum extent practicable, with public transportation providers to ensure consistency with the performance targets that public transportation providers establish under 49 U.S.C. 5326(c) and 49 U.S.C. 5329(d). Additionally, each MPO shall integrate the goals, objectives, performance measures, and targets from other performance-based plans and programs integrated into the metropolitan transportation planning process.

23 CFR 450.324(f)(3) and (4) outline requirements to the MTP. The MPO MTP shall include:

- a description of the (Federally required) performance measures and performance targets used in assessing the performance of the transportation system.
- a system performance report evaluating the condition and performance of the transportation system with respect to the (Federally required) performance targets including progress achieved by the MPO the performance targets.

23 CFR 450.218(q) and 23 CFR 450.326(d) require that, to the maximum extent practicable, a description of the anticipated effect of the TIP toward achieving the performance targets identified by the MPO in the MTP. TIPs shall link investment priorities to achievement of performance targets in the plan.



23 CFR 450.314(h) requires that the MPO(s), State(s), and the providers of public transportation shall jointly agree upon and develop specific written provisions for cooperatively developing and sharing information related to:

- transportation performance data,
- the selection of performance targets,
- the reporting of performance targets,
- the reporting of performance to be used in tracking progress toward attainment of critical outcomes for the region of the MPO (see § 450.306(d)) and the collection of data for the State asset management plan for the NHS.

23 CFR 450.340 states that MPOs have two years from the effective dates of the planning and performance measures rule to comply with the requirements.

4.12.2 Current Status

Performance Based Planning Agreements

The CRCOG 2022-2023 UPWP, Appendix A: Statement of Cooperative MPO/State/Transit Operators' Planning Roles & Responsibilities (adopted May 26, 2021) identifies the roles of the MPO in carrying out the performance-based planning and programming process.

CTDOT, CRCOG, NHCOG, NVCOG, RiverCOG, GHTD, Middletown Area Transit and Estuary Transit District fully executed a written agreement in May 2018 Regarding Transportation Planning & Funding in the Hartford Urbanized Area. The agreement details that MPOs, the transit operators and CTDOT mutually agree to meet to discuss setting performance targets.

CTDOT, the Massachusetts DOT, CRCOG, the Franklin Regional Transit Authority, the Greater Hartford Transit District and the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority executed a Memorandum of Understanding in October 2020 concerning the Effect of the Urbanized Area Designations of the 2010 Census on Coordination among Metropolitan Planning Organizations, States and Public Transportation Operators. This MOU provides coordinated transportation planning for the Springfield, MA-CT urbanized area including target setting.

Incorporation of Targets into Planning Documents

The CRCOG includes targets in the FFY2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the 2019 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

23 CFR 450.324 requires that the MTP include an evaluation of system performance with respect to the performance targets. The CRCOG MTP includes a Transportation Performance



Management chapter that describes the performance measures and targets for assessing performance of the transportation system. Visualizations and narratives were used to demonstrate the pavement and bridge condition across the region, and tables provide some data on current performance for the other federally required measures. However, additional information would improve the system performance report to document how the MPO is working to achieve its targets.

The MPO's approach to Performance Based Planning and Programming is an ongoing effort that is centered around adopting the State's targets. CRCOG has not adopted a set of performance targets unique to the region however is supportive of the idea if additional resources become available.

4.12.3 Findings

The MPO has not produced a stand-alone System Performance Report; however, performance items are included in various MTP chapters. The MTP Transportation Performance Management chapter provides the performance measures and adopted CTDOT targets but does not include how those measures are influencing the planning and programming processes conducted by the MPO. In an effort to better track regional system performance over time, CRCOG may want to consider using an independent stand-alone document that can be updated on a yearly basis. Information describing the existing conditions of assets and the progress made toward achieving the performance target in comparison to previous reports should be included and CRCOG can decide whether this information should be provided in a quantitative or qualitative format.

The TIP includes a discussion of each performance measure with no description of how the anticipated effects the projects identified in the TIP are working toward achievement of the adopted performance targets.

Recommendation: The TIP should include a description of how the anticipated effects the projects in the TIP are working toward achievement of the adopted performance targets and how these regional transportation investments align with targets. Consider summarizing the investments by category (e.g. bridges, pavements, congestion mitigation) as a way to analyze how these program investments meet the targets.



4.13 Congestion Management Process / Management and Operations

4.13.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(k)(3) and 23 CFR 450.322 set forth requirements for the congestion management process (CMP) in TMAs. The CMP is a systematic approach for managing congestion through a process that provides for a safe and effective integrated management and operation of the multimodal transportation system. TMAs designated as non-attainment for ozone must also provide an analysis of the need for additional capacity for a proposed improvement over travel demand reduction, and operational management strategies.

23 CFR 450.324(f)(5) requires the MTP include Management and Operations (M&O) of the transportation network as an integrated, multimodal approach to optimize the performance of the existing transportation infrastructure. Effective M&O strategies include measurable regional operations goals and objectives and specific performance measures to optimize system performance.

4.13.2 Current Status

CRCOG develops the Congestion Management Process (CMP) Report for the entire Hartford TMA, with the most recent CMP update dated November 2020. They coordinate with the other TMA COGs to identify specific traffic impacts and select the specific routes for analysis. CRCOG leads the analysis effort and then shares the draft results with the other COGs for comment. Each COG is then responsible for the implementation of strategies and project development within their COG.

The Hartford TMA CMP focuses on all the freeway routes within the TMA, as well as select principal arterials. With the availability of more robust data (e.g., NPMRDS) on non-freeways, specifically along principal arterials, the CRCOG plans to expand the modeling to include more roadways on future updates of the CMP. The CMP identifies six (6) performance measures to characterize current and future conditions on the system and provides congestion mitigation strategies for implementation.

The CRCOG's Greater Hartford TIM Coalition (GHTC), staffed by CRCOG, operates a Traffic Incident Management (TIM) program that is responsible for providing guidance and direction to the TIM community to achieve their goals and strengthen the program for non-recurring congestion. The GHTC work includes engaging regional planning organizations, municipalities, the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), and other stakeholders to reinforce the TIM organizational practices and requirements. TIM strategies for the Hartford TMA are included in the CMP. During the current Covid-19 pandemic, the GHTC quarterly meetings have



been limited, however activities such as completing the annual TIM Self-Assessment and coordinating training for TIM responders have continued. A Connecticut Traffic Incident Scene Management Field Guide was developed and issued in the Fall of 2021.

CRCOG's latest Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Strategic Plan is dated March 2015. The objective of the Strategic Plan was focused on the identification of applications for ITS that will benefit freeway operations, arterial road operations, and public transit operations. The strategic plan identifies ITS strategies to maximize the throughput of the existing transportation network in the region. CRCOG also works with the Technology Transfer (T2) Center's Traffic Signal Circuit Rider to provide technical training and support to the municipalities.

The Hartford Regional ITS Architecture was last updated in 2015. Following that effort, CRCOG supported the CTDOT update of the Statewide Regional ITS Architecture in 2018. Since 2018 the roles and responsibilities for maintenance and update of the regional architectures have not been well defined. CTDOT has recently initiated coordination with the CRCOG to address different architectures and determine how best to proceed.

4.13.3 Findings

CRCOG has a good record of coordinating data collection and analyses within the Hartford TMA. Good examples of management and operations coordination exists within the TMA (such as the Greater Hartford TIM Coalition), however the CMP document references many CRCOG-specific strategies rather than strategies within the whole TMA.

Commendation: The operations of the CRCOG's Greater Hartford TIM Coalition (GHTC) is commended as a best practice. In addition to coordinating with CTDOT and the T2 Center on training for TIM responders, the GHTC recently leveraged funding from various state and federal sources to produce a Connecticut Traffic Incident Scene Management Field Guide. This guide provides information and guidance to emergency responders on the management of traffic incidents to ensure a quick and safe clearance of roadways. The GHTC produces a newsletter as well to communicate ongoing TIM activities and updates.

Recommendation: In the next CMP update, Hartford TMA COGs should collaborate on TMA-wide strategies that could benefit management and operations. One example includes park and ride lots that complement travel demand management and the transit system; the CMP currently only documents CRCOG's available and utilized parking spaces and amenities.

Recommendation: Coordination with CTDOT as it relates to ITS within the Hartford TMA is essential, ensuring that future opportunities are identified and planned for. The region should collaborate with CTDOT to determine how/if the CRCOG's 2015 ITS Strategic Plan should be updated to reflect the region's plans and implementation of strategies, or to determine if



advancing the ITS goals and objectives through a statewide-ITS Strategic Plan is more appropriate. ITS Strategies should ensure they are consistent with the MTP and TIP.

Recommendation: Coordinate with CTDOT to determine which (or both) of the regional ITS architectures should be maintained going forward. Clarify the roles and responsibility for maintaining and updating the regional ITS architecture(s).

Available FHWA / FTA Resources:

- Guidance for Implementation of TIM Performance Measurement – website:
http://nchrptimpm.timnetwork.org/?page_id=884

4.14 Travel Demand Forecasting Model and Scenario Planning

4.14.1 Regulatory Basis

23 CFR 450.324(f)(1) requires that the Metropolitan Transportation Plan include the projected transportation demand of persons and goods in the Metropolitan Planning Area over the period of the transportation plan. Travel demand forecasting models are used in the planning process to identify deficiencies in future year transportation systems and evaluate the impacts of alternative transportation investments. In air quality non-attainment and maintenance areas, they are also used to estimate regional vehicle activity for use in mobile source emission models that support air quality conformity determinations.

23 USC 134(i)(4) outlines the use of scenario planning by MPOs.

4.14.2 Current Status

The CRCOG regional travel demand model covers the Capitol Region and portions of other CT regions including Northeastern CT, Southeastern CT, the Lower CT River Valley, the South Central Region, Naugatuck Valley and CT Metro areas in addition to a portion of southern Massachusetts. The latest model documentation was prepared by the CTDOT consultant in coordination with the Interstate 84 Hartford project which CTDOT is utilizing the model for. The MPO uses the travel demand model to assist with MTP future year estimates of vehicle miles traveled, corridor studies and scenario planning, assisting with assessment of future traffic volumes and evaluating future transportation alternatives. CTDOT's statewide model is utilized for MTP air quality conformity determinations.

CRCOG initiated a scenario planning exercise in 2019 which resulted in a number of lessons learned (including software strengths and limitations) and calibrations to the region's Travel



Demand Model. CRCOG anticipates they may introduce scenario planning into corridor studies in the future.

4.14.3 Findings

CRCOG has worked with CTDOT's consultant through the Interstate 84 Hartford project to enhance and better document the regional travel demand model. Other than coordination on the Interstate 84 project, CRCOG does not coordinate the regional model with CTDOT although items such as population growth are similar. CRCOG has been working to train existing staff on the model to assist their on-call consultant with modeling assignments.

CRCOG's scenario planning efforts assisted in better understanding data (e.g. various regional population and employment projections), model calibration needs, and strengths and weaknesses of software tools. For instance, CRCOG found the Urban Footprint software was suitable for studying small areas but was not ideal for assessing scenarios at a regional scale. Additionally, this work revealed the limitations of transit-oriented development in the Capitol Region to make significant impacts on congestion and VMT. Lessons learned will be able to be applied to future initiatives, assisting in understanding alternative scenarios.

Coordination between CRCOG and the other MPOs within the Hartford TMA has not occurred in any detail on scenario planning efforts. CRCOG has been sharing their experiences and lessons learned in their work with the neighboring Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC), in Massachusetts.

Commendation: CRCOG is commended for taking the initiative to understand how scenario planning can be implemented within the region and syncing it with the regional travel demand model which was calibrated during the process.

Recommendation: CRCOG is encouraged to collaborate with CTDOT as it relates to the regional Travel Demand Model and the Statewide model to understand opportunities for coordination or potential growth areas. At a minimum, coordination could focus on future MTP updates, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions data from the Statewide model, or incorporation of new Census data in 2022.

Recommendation: CRCOG is encouraged to update other MPOs within the Hartford TMA about the scenario planning process and keep them informed as other regional advancements in scenario planning are made.



APPENDIX A – PARTICIPANTS AND MEETINGS

The following individuals from the federal team were involved in the Hartford urbanized area virtual review meetings:

FHWA	FTA
Kurt Salmoiraghi	Leah Sirmin
Jennifer Carrier	Sergio Coronado
Erik Shortell	Margaret Griffin
Michael Chong	
Tim Snyder	

Agendas and attendees of the virtual and public meetings can be found in the next few pages.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2021

- 9:30-9:40 (10 Minutes) Virtual Meeting Logistics, Overview, and Introductions
- 9:40-10:00 (20 Minutes) CRCOG Comments to Federal Team / Presentation
- 10:00-10:45 (45 Minutes) Programming Efforts, Financial Planning and TIP Development

Attendees: FHWA: Kurt Salmoiraghi, Jennifer Carrier, Erik Shortell, Michael Chong, Timothy Snyder; FTA: Leah Sirmin; Sergio Coronado, Margaret Griffin; CTDOT: Maribeth Wojenski, Grayson Wright, Katheryn Faraci, Rose Etuka, Hugh Hayward, Jennifer Trio, Kelly Cain; CRCOG: Rob Aloise, Pauline Yoder, Tim Malone, Cara Radzins, Roger Krahn, Pramod Pandey, Sotoria Montanari, Erik Snowden, Caitlin Palmer, Terri Thompson

MONDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2021

- 2:00-2:10 (10 Minutes) Virtual Meeting Logistics, Overview, and Introductions
- 2:10-2:55 (45 Minutes) Scenario Planning and Travel Demand Modeling
- 2:55-3:15 (20 Minutes) Public Participation in Planning
- 3:15-4:15 (60 Minutes) Civil Rights (Title VI, EJ, LEP, ADA)



Attendees: FHWA: Kurt Salmoiraghi, Jennifer Carrier, Erik Shortell, Michael Chong; FTA: Leah Sirmin; Sergio Coronado, Margaret Griffin; CTDOT: Maribeth Wojenski, Grayson Wright, Katheryn Faraci, Tiffany Garcia, Debra Goss; CRCOG: Rob Aloise, Pauline Yoder, Tim Malone, Devon Lechtenburg, Caitlin Palmer, Cara Radzins, Roger Krahn, Pramod Pandey, Sotoria Montanari, Erik Snowden, Terri Thompson; NVCOG: Richard Donovan

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2021

- 9:00-9:10 (10 Minutes) Virtual Meeting Logistics, Overview, and Introductions
- 9:10-9:40 (30 Minutes) TMA / MPO Coordination: Overview of coordination efforts (includes NVCOG, RiverCOG, and NHCOG); Transit partners welcome
- 9:40-10:25 (45 Minutes) Operations and Management and Congestion Management Process
- 10:25-10:45 (20 Minutes) Safety Planning
- 10:45-11:10 (25 Minutes) PBPP (including target setting)

Attendees: FHWA: Kurt Salmoiraghi, Jennifer Carrier, Erik Shortell, Michael Chong, Timothy Snyder; FTA: Leah Sirmin; Sergio Coronado, Margaret Griffin; CTDOT: Maribeth Wojenski, Grayson Wright, Katheryn Faraci, CRCOG: Rob Aloise, Pauline Yoder, Tim Malone, Devon Lechtenburg, Caitlin Palmer, Cara Radzins, Roger Krahn, Pramod Pandey, Sotoria Montanari, Erik Snowden, Terri Thompson, Mike Cipriano, Ryan Faulkner; NVCOG: Richard Donovan, Mark Nielson, Josh Lecar; LTAP: Theresa Schwartz, Melissa Evans; RiverCOG: Sam Gold, Robert Haramut; NHCOG: Robert Phillips; PVPC: Jeff McCollough

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2021

- 1:00-1:45 (45 Minutes) Transit Planning Including Coordination with Partnering Agencies, Livability and Bicycle & Pedestrian Planning
- 1:45-2:05 (20 Minutes) Other Items Surfacing During Earlier Sessions, Closing and Next Steps (could include Freight, Environmental Mitigation, Other)

Attendees: FHWA: Kurt Salmoiraghi, Jennifer Carrier, Erik Shortell; FTA: Leah Sirmin; Sergio Coronado, Margaret Griffin; CTDOT: Maribeth Wojenski, Grayson Wright, Katheryn Faraci, Lisa



Rivers, Anna Bergeron, Dennis Solensky; CRCOG: Rob Aloise, Pauline Yoder, Tim Malone, Devon Lechtenburg, Caitlin Palmer, Cara Radzins, Roger Krahn, Sotoria Montanari, Terri Thompson, Ryan Faulkner, Christopher Henchey; NVCOG: Richard Donovan; CTTransit: Josh Rickman; Greater Hartford Transit District: Mary Deppe; WRTD: Linda Hapeman; East Coast Greenway: Bruce Donald



APPENDIX B – PUBLIC COMMENTS, TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE AND MUNICIPAL INPUT

A virtual meeting was held on Monday, October 25, 2021 beginning at 11:15 AM to solicit public comments and Transportation Committee input on the transportation planning program within the Hartford TMA. FHWA and FTA gave a presentation on the federal certification review process and the Committee Chairman opened the meeting for comments. No one from the public provided comments. The Transportation Committee input is generally bulleted below, a recording of the meeting can be found on the CRCOG website located here:

<https://crcog.org/2021/10/federal-certification-review/>

- CRCOG staff does a good job and is responsive, open, and encourages participation. They provide technical assistance and coordinate federally required activities (e.g. TIP) well.
- There is ongoing frustration related to CRCOG not being provided with the flexibility to carry out more programs, there are restrictions and CRCOG would like the process to be more locally driven. A committee member commented that there should be a proactive approach – one that put more trust in regions to carry out their programs.
- Another committee member agreed with the prior bullet and commented that there needs to be some flexibility, that there are too many restrictions and MPOs should be able to do more.
- A third committee member expressed their frustration with processes and requirements (mostly in funding applications) expressing they want to be trusted more. It was also expressed that CRCOG staff does a great job keeping towns informed.
- It was clarified by a member of the Transportation Committee that there is frustration with the Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP). They are interested in CRCOG conducting a demonstration where the MPO takes the entire role of processing and supervising – allowing more flexibility for rural and smaller communities. This member expressed they are looking for the flexibility and ability to process applications in a timely manner and expressed concerns with the upcoming CTDOT retirement cliffs.
- Other members expressed bid prices are, in some cases, are much higher per ton and that utilizing the Vendor-in-Place program may be beneficial and that CTDOT's approach to LOTICIP versus Surface Transportation Block Grant reviews warrant revisiting, that LOTICIP reviews could be scaled back.



One email comment was received following the above referenced meeting, from a municipality who expressed CROG staff does a great job reaching out to all member towns to participate in appropriate programs. It was further expressed that more emphasis on true planning, for future expansion, and infrastructure that will adapt to the “deliver overnight anywhere” situation we are currently experiencing. The municipality also commented they are interested in green initiatives and current (and future) freight issues and/or commuting.



APPENDIX C – PREVIOUS FINDINGS AND DISPOSITION

The previous certification review for the Hartford urbanized area was conducted in 2018, with the certification issued on March 12, 2018. The 2018 Certification Review recommendations and the current appraisal are summarized below:

Review Area	Recommendations / Commendations	August 24, 2020 Mid-Cycle Check-In Meeting Notes	September 2021 MPO Appraisal
MPO Structure and Agreements	<u>Recommendation:</u> The MPO is reminded that roles and responsibilities, consistent with planning provisions of the FAST Act, must be updated within the UPWP Prospectus by May 27, 2018.	UPWP Appendix A – Statement of Cooperative MPO / State / Transit Operators’ Planning Roles and Responsibilities endorsed in May 2018 MOU within TMA executed May 2018; MOU with PVPC and MassDOT continuing to advance	The Statement of Cooperative MPO / State / Transit Operators’ Planning Roles and Responsibilities has been included in the 2022/2023 UPWP Appendix A MOU with PVPC and MassDOT fully executed in October 2020
Metropolitan Transportation Plan	<u>Recommendations:</u> The 2019 plan must conform to new requirements from the Final Planning Rule, to be phased in by May 27, 2018, which among other provisions, must include a discussion or statement pertaining to the safety targets adopted by the MPO as well as transit asset management targets. The CRCOG should update its project selection and prioritization criteria to reflect the role of the Long-Range Transportation Plan (RTP) in the establishment of transportation priorities. CRCOG should also add language to its next RTP describing how the goals and projects outlined in the plan will be programmed in the TIP for implementation. [Retained from the 2014 Review] The CRCOG should include a breakdown of projected revenues for operating and maintenance costs as part of its RTP. The format currently used to demonstrate fiscal constraint for the RTP’s proposed capital investments would be acceptable for use in the operating and	MTP updated in 2019 and Chapter 8 addresses performance measures Selection criteria comment: This is an ongoing initiative, targets and PM are fairly new; CRCOG has tried to come up with strategies to make improvements; maybe in early stages; safety is complex and the trend is not a positive one; One thing they have done – revised LOTCIP selection criteria to focus more on safety; This is a constantly evolving item that CRCOG is trying to fit in with the latest targets O&M costs – Reflected in the TP finance chapter; they tried to reflect the best they could understand O&M is almost solely funded by state and does not go through region as a TIP amendment; DOT provided data to regions	Selection criteria comment: CRCOG continues to assess and refine its project selection criteria specific to each funding program with each solicitation. Since the mid-cycle review the following project solicitations have been advanced: • CMAQ solicitation – While the criteria categories for this funding source remained unchanged from the previous solicitation, the descriptions were revised to better reward implementation of innovative technologies as well as projects that support transportation priorities set in CRCOG’s MTP • 2022 LOTCIP solicitation – Although an RFP for this solicitation is not anticipated to be distributed until September 2021, the LOTCIP Project Selection Criteria for that solicitation was revised and finalized in Summer 2021. To better achieve transportation priorities and performance



	<p>maintenance costs section as well. [Retained from the 2014 Review]</p> <p>For the next update of the RTP, the MPO should include an environmental policy discussion, in lieu of a project discussion, in terms of implementation of mitigation activities to minimize environmental impacts of transportation improvements (for example, low-impact development or green strategies for infrastructure improvements). USDOT will provide more specific direction in environmental mitigation. [Retained from the 2014 Review]</p>	<p>Environmental policy considerations – They have information in the TP (included GHS and complete streets); There is also some criteria in CRCOG’s selection criteria / process – e.g. green infrastructure; Region is not seeing too much on low-impact / green strategies from towns</p>	<p>targets, rating criteria was modified to provide additional emphasis on Transportation Safety.</p>
Transit Planning	<p><u>Commendation:</u> The MPO has improved the Regional Bus Shelter program taking into consideration the grievances of the municipalities and creating a standardized method to quickly construct or update shelters.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u> The MPO should continue to identify key personnel in anchor institutions to partner on Transit Oriented Development. Identifying these institutions is essential to any TOD plans but only the first step in creating meaningful partnerships or lasting progress in the region.</p>	<p>CRCOG completed 2nd anchor institutions project in 2019 and they continue to convene their CAC; WL good example of success</p> <p>TOD collaborative – met twice since 2018; includes non-profits, state agencies, private agencies, and towns; CRCOG received a grant – linked with Harvard; Given current situation it has been placed on hold</p>	<p>CRCOG is in the process of initiating a TOD Roles, Visioning, Viability, and Tools Analysis Study. The purpose of the Study is to build on previous TOD-related efforts and help municipalities identify and advance site-specific TOD visions and analyze their financial feasibility. This Study's vision is to create a market-bearing TOD plan for each community that will draw developer interest and investment in the property. This effort is currently in consultant negotiations and should be under contract late 2021.</p>
Public Participation	<p><u>Commendation:</u> The MPO is commended by the Review Team for customizing outreach efforts and utilizing varied strategies for specific audiences to ensure good communication.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u> The annual review of the Public Participation program should include identification of general best practices and lessons learned, based on a critical examination of processes that worked and that did not work, to inform future efforts.</p>	<p>PIP includes a recommendation – best practices and lessons learned section; CRCOG recently submitted FY19 and 20 PIP assessment (in August 2020) as they had overlooked previous FY19 submission; looking to see if this template (every 2 years) works better</p>	<p>CRCOG will be updating its Public Participation Plan in FY2023. This update will include an assessment of CRCOG’s previous public involvement efforts, including best practices and lessons learned.</p>



<p>Freight Planning</p>	<p><u>Recommendation:</u> The Review Team recommends that the MPO utilize their mapping of freight restrictions and constraints to inform the MTP and the TIP, and continue to share the information with freight stakeholders in the region.</p>	<p>Freight planning – included section in MTP and created a freight fact sheet – shared with TC – on CRCOG website</p>	<p>CRCOG will update the Freight Fact Sheet regularly (every 2-3 years). CRCOG will also coordinate with CTDOT on the upcoming update of the Statewide Freight Plan. We will share all of our mapping efforts.</p> <p>CRCOG is participating in the MAP Forum</p>
<p>Transportation Safety</p>	<p><u>Recommendation:</u> As the MPO modifies the safety criteria in the project selection process, strategies for progress on targets should be considered such as low-cost safety countermeasures and opportunities to partner with the CTDOT on safety strategies.</p>	<p>Recently completed a new complete streets policy and currently finalizing a regional safety plan (w/CTDOT and VN); increased LOTCIP solicitation points</p> <p>Roundabout feasibility study – upcoming</p> <p>Partnership with others re safety – SHSP Steering Committee meetings; T2 involvement, NPMRDS Toll User Group</p> <p>Using capital plan to move projects into TIP; CRCOG wants to understand how to better collaborate</p> <p>Safety trends are not positive – crashes are increasing; CRCOG is trying to concentrate on this (which constantly revolves)</p>	<p>A short ongoing safety agenda item - Sixty Seconds for Safety- has been added to the monthly Transportation Committee meetings. Examples of topics include sharing current crash data on CRCOG local roads, and FHWA safety countermeasure video on centerline and shoulder rumble strips.</p> <p>LOTCIP project selection criteria for year 2022 increased the points in the Traffic Operations and Safety rating, from 15 to 21, from the prior year 2020 solicitation.</p> <p>The Roundabout Safety Screening project work by CRCOG’s selected consultant is expected to start in September 2021. A focus will be to identify intersections that will result in significant reductions in crashes if converted to a roundabout layout.</p> <p>CRCOG staff regularly participates in the UConn Safety Circuit Rider Advisory Committee Quarterly meetings.</p> <p>Two CRCOG staff members participated in the CT Strategic Highway Safety Plan steering committee, involved in updating the 5 year plan.</p>



			<p>CRCOG has developed the Connecticut Traffic Incident Scene Management Field Guide succinctly detailing the latest TIM best practices for practitioners use. Currently, 5,700 copies of the guide are being printed to be distributed to various practitioners.</p>
<p>Nonmotorized Planning / Livability</p>	<p><u>Commendation:</u> While bicycle/pedestrian committees are found in other MPOs around the United States, CRCOG has the only one among the MPOs in Connecticut. The specific focus of this specialized and active committee is vital to inform the MTP and the planning process.</p>	-	<p>CRCOG released an RFP for regional bikeshare (with 19 participating towns) and selected a vendor to own and operate a bikeshare system for a phased implementation in a total of six communities. As a result of COVID, that vendor went out of business, but some its micro mobility assets were acquired by another company, Superpedestrian, which instead has provided a scooter share system in the City of Hartford. The system has been a success. Since launching at the end of April, riders in Hartford have taken over 110,000 trips. The average number of trips per scooter per day is above 4.0, a rate of ridership comparable with major European cities and among the highest across Superpedestrian's US Fleet. Additionally, Superpedestrian has enrolled over 300 riders into its LINK- Up low-income program, which offers a 70% discount for anyone receiving state or federal subsidy.</p> <p>CRCOG continues to explore regional bikeshare and has entered into a contract with a consultant to update the 2014 regional bike share feasibility study. The study is expected to be completed in six months and will provide fresh insight into the bike share market, business models for ownership and</p>



			<p>operation of bike share systems, costs and implementation.</p> <p>CRCOG also received a grant from the Centers for Disease Control to conduct a statewide active transportation project. The funding allows CRCOG to work with communities across the state on small-scale projects aimed at improving active transportation options.</p>
Planning for Operations	<p><u>Commendation:</u> The MPO demonstrates an all-around strong commitment toward improving traffic operations for both recurring and non-recurring congestion and has built solid working relationships with the array of stakeholders in operations around the state.</p>	-	<p>Additional Congestion Analysis and mapping conducted in anticipation of upcoming new performance measure requirements. Coordination with CTDOT has been ongoing including offer to expand analysis beyond the CRCOG region using the tools CRCOG has developed.</p> <p>As detailed in the Transportation Safety Recommendation, CRCOG has developed the Connecticut Traffic Incident Scene Management Field Guide detailing TIM best practices for practitioners use. Along with providing guidance for safety, guidance is provided to address non-recurring congestion associated with Traffic Incidents.</p>
Congestion Management Process	<p><u>Commendation:</u> The results of the 2015 CMP represent a strong baseline for future analysis to measure effectiveness of the various congestion strategies developed by the MPO and to utilize in developing and monitoring related targets.</p>	<p>NPMRDS; continuing to update; in draft format; sent to partners in TMA for feedback recently; should be coming out soon; they are coordinating with CTDOT PM unit; would have data through 2019;</p>	<p>CRCOG took the lead role in preparing a comprehensive update to the Congestion Management Process Report for the Hartford TMZ. The completed/approved report is dated November 2020.</p>
Performance Management	<p><u>Recommendations:</u> The MPO should be considering strategies that support the adopted safety targets, and be proactively involved with the CTDOT on how to measure investment and how to portray which projects support safety targets within the STIP/TIP.</p>	<p>NMPRDS/RITIS Tools User Group participant (with other RPOs)</p> <p>Interest by CRCOG to better coordinate</p>	<p>CRCOG advocates for a performance-based approach to investments, especially for larger projects/studies such as the Greater Hartford Mobility Study that can have significant impacts on regional Bridge conditions and Congestion/Travel Time Reliability measures. CRCOG awaits access to the GHMS</p>



	<p>A high degree of coordination between the MPO, transit providers, and the CTDOT will be needed as more targets are established and reporting requirements begin.</p>		<p>existing condition report but has been assured in meetings that performance measures are being adequately considered.</p> <p>Upcoming Scenario Planning efforts may inform performance results associated with various regional investments / strategies.</p>
<p>Civil Rights (Title VI, EJ, LEP, ADA)</p>	<p><u>Recommendation:</u> CRCOG is recommended to work with CTDOT to educate municipalities on their responsibilities under ADA and Section 504 to ensure that all programs, activities, and services under their jurisdiction are examined to identify barriers to access for persons with disabilities. With CTDOT's assistance, an ADA Transition Plan or Program Access Plan should be developed that describes the steps to make their program areas accessible to persons with disabilities, per 28 CFR §35.150(d).</p>	<p>ADA – several presentations and memos to TC including a 2018 DOT presentation – DOT presenting again in Sept 2020; Municipal ADA Assessments; May 15, 2019 program information / email to Michael Chong related to ADA program</p>	<p>In September 2020, Snow Peng from CTDOT gave a presentation to the CRCOG Transportation Committee on current state-level ADA Planning Initiatives. CRCOG continues to inform municipalities of available resources and trainings related to ADA Transition Planning.</p>



APPENDIX D - LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act
AMPO: Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations
CAA: Clean Air Act
CFR: Code of Federal Regulations
CMP: Congestion Management Process
CO: Carbon Monoxide
COG: Council of Governments
DEMHS: Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security
DOT: Department of Transportation
EJ: Environmental Justice
FAST: Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act
FHWA: Federal Highway Administration
FTA: Federal Transit Administration
FY: Fiscal Year
HSIP: Highway Safety Improvement Program
ITS: Intelligent Transportation Systems
LEP: Limited-English-Proficiency
M&O: Management and Operations
MAP-21: Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century
MPA: Metropolitan Planning Area
MPO: Metropolitan Planning Organization
MTP: Metropolitan Transportation Plan
NAAQS: National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide
O₃: Ozone
PTASP: Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan
PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}: Particulate Matter
SHSP: Strategic Highway Safety Plan
SMS: Safety Management Systems
STIP: State Transportation Improvement Program
TDM: Travel Demand Management
TIP: Transportation Improvement Program
TMA: Transportation Management Area
U.S.C.: United States Code
UPWP: Unified Planning Work Program
USDOT: United States Department of Transportation





Report prepared by:

**FHWA Connecticut Division Office
450 Main Street, Suite 612
Hartford, CT 06103**

**FTA Region 1
55 Broadway
Cambridge, MA 02142**