

Agenda Item Summary

To: Policy Board; Transportation Committee

From: Cara Radzins, Deputy Director of Transportation Planning

CC: Matt Hart, Executive Director; Rob Aloise, Director of Transportation Planning

Meeting Date: April 26, 2023 (Transportation Committee: April 24, 2023)

Subject: Conformity with the Clean Air Act for Ozone

Background: CRCOG is required to demonstrate that its Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) do not violate the federal Clean Air Act. Because air quality districts overlap planning regions, the emissions analysis must be coordinated. The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) performs this coordination role. Each region submits its draft TIP and MTP to CTDOT, and CTDOT in turn combines the TIPs and MTPs to analyze the emissions impacts on each air quality district. The air quality analysis includes an assessment of ozone precursors – volatile organic compounds (VOC) and nitrogen oxides (NOx) – as well as of particulate matter that is 2.5 microns or smaller (PM_{2.5}). CRCOG is in an attainment area for PM_{2.5}. CRCOG is part of the Greater Connecticut Ozone Area, which is classified as a “moderate” nonattainment area for 2015 National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and a “serious” nonattainment area for 2008 NAAQS.

The February 2023 analysis shows that the MTPs and TIPs statewide – and specifically CRCOG’s new 2023-2050 MTP and existing 2021-2024 TIP – are within the approved emissions budgets. The full report is available at <https://www.crcog.org/mtp>.

Benefit to Member Towns/CRCOG: Demonstration of air quality conformity ensures that the projects identified in CRCOG’s transportation planning program will not have disproportionately high emissions impacts.

Financial/Operational Impact: Demonstration of air quality conformity is a requirement of CRCOG’s role as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Endorsement is required to maintain our receipt of federal transportation funding.

Project Schedule: A new Air Quality Conformity Determination will need to be developed in 2024 for the FFY2025-2028 TIP.

Recommendation: CRCOG Staff recommends approval. The Transportation Committee will provide a recommendation at their meeting on April 24, 2023.

Attachments:

- Resolution: Conformity with the Clean Air Act for Ozone

RESOLUTION

CONFORMITY WITH THE CLEAN AIR ACT FOR OZONE

WHEREAS, the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) is required to submit an Air Quality Conformity Statement to the US Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in accordance with the final conformity rule promulgated by EPA (40 CFR 51 and 93) when adopting an annual Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) or when effecting a significant revision of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP); and

WHEREAS, Title 42, Section 7506 (3) (A) states that conformity of transportation plans and programs will be demonstrated if:

1. the plans and programs are consistent with recent estimates of mobile source emissions;
2. the plans and programs provide for the expeditious implementation of certain transportation control measures;
3. the plans and programs contribute to annual emissions reductions consistent with the Clean Air Act of 1977, as amended; and

WHEREAS, it is the opinion of CRCOG that the plans and programs approved today, April 26, 2023, and submitted to FHWA and EPA conform to the requirements of Title 42, Section 7506 (3) (A) as interpreted by EPA (40 CFR 51 and 93); and

WHEREAS, the State of Connecticut has elected to assess conformity in the Greater Connecticut Ozone Nonattainment area (Litchfield, Hartford, Tolland, New London, and Windham Counties) and the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) has jointly assessed the impact of all transportation plans and programs in this Ozone Nonattainment area (*Ozone and PM2.5 Air Quality Conformity Determination, February 2023*); and

WHEREAS, CTDOT's assessment has found that plans and programs jointly meet mobile source emission's guidelines advanced by EPA pursuant to Section 7506 (3) (A);

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, CRCOG finds that the 2023-2050 MTP and the FFY 2021-2024 TIP and all amendments conform to air quality requirements of the US EPA (40 CFR 51 and 93), related USDOT guidelines (23 CFR 450), and with Title 42, Section 7506 (3) (A) and hereby approves CTDOT's Ozone and PM2.5 Air Quality Conformity Determination dated February 2023.

CERTIFICATE

I certify the above is a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Policy Board at its meeting held on April 26, 2023.

BY: _____ DATE: _____
Jason Bowsza, Secretary