

MEMORANDUM

To: Policy Board
From: Matt Hart, Executive Director
CC: CRCOG Staff
Meeting Date: May 24, 2023
Subject: Staff Reports

Below please find a summary report from staff for the Board's information. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- We will hold CRCOG's **Annual Meeting** on Thursday, June 15, 2023, from 1:30 – 5:00 PM at the Riverfront Recapture Boat House in Hartford. Michelle McCabe from [Connecticut Main Street Center](#) will serve as our keynote speaker; her remarks will focus on CMSC's mission to inspire downtowns across our state. We will host a social hour following the keynote and presentations. Staff will send invitations in the coming weeks. We're looking forward to an inspiring and fun event!
- We plan to hold a **Strategic Visioning session** with the Policy Board at a special meeting on the morning of June 12. Our chair, Mayor Stewart, has graciously offered to host the session at New Britain City Hall from 9-11:30AM. The local firm of Grossman Solutions will serve as our facilitators. We will use this session to discuss CRCOG's vision and mission, and to identify our strategic priorities for the next 3-5 years. Over the past few weeks, the Grossman Solutions team has conducted a series of interviews with key stakeholders to help them design our staff and Board visioning sessions. I hope that a majority of Board members will be able to join us on June 12 for an important and fun strategic visioning session.
- Elizabeth Sanderson and I remain involved with **public sector workforce development initiatives**. Along with Capital Workforce Partners (CWP) and UConn's School of Public Policy, we recently convened a task force meeting with a variety of state and local officials. We established three working groups: a Prek-12 employment group, with the State Department of Education and CWP as co-convenors, a state employment group, with the State Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and UConn SPP as co-convenors, and a municipal employment group, with CCM and CRCOG as co-convenors. All three working groups will focus on strengthening or developing talent pipelines for key positions within each sector.

BIL/IIJA UPDATE

- The U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) issued a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for **Round 2 of the Safe Streets and Roads for All** Discretionary Grant Program. Over \$1 billion is available to municipalities for safety

plans and projects that will significantly reduce or eliminate roadway fatalities and serious injuries for all roadway users. A summary of the NOFO is available on [CRCOG's SS4A Webpage](#), with links to additional resources and recent webinars. CRCOG staff members are assisting five towns with preparing applications to this funding opportunity.

- U.S. DOT announced availability of \$848 million for the **PROTECT discretionary grant program** – Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation. This program seeks to make transportation infrastructure more resilient to climate change and extreme weather events and aims to reduce damage and disruption to the transportation system, improve safety of the traveling public, and improve equity by addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities most often vulnerable to hazards. More information about this program is available on [CRCOG's BIL Webpage](#).
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has opened the **2023 Clean School Bus Program (CSB)**, which provides \$5 billion over five years (FY2022-2026) to replace existing school buses with zero-emission and low-emission models. Visit [EPA's CSB Program Webpage](#) for more information.
- CRCOG is seeking to learn more about **priority projects in your municipality** so we may assist with connecting projects with available federal funding opportunities. This [memorandum](#), which was distributed to the Transportation Committee at their April 24 meeting, provides more information about this Project Screening effort.
- CRCOG staff are collaborating with representatives from multiple state agencies and departments, including BILT, DOT, DEEP, and DEMHS to review funding opportunities and/or coordinate efforts.
- Visit CRCOG's [BIL/IIJA webpage](#) for information about federal programs and general information, including:
 - U.S. DOT announced the Key Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs) and anticipated timelines for FY2023. A [Memorandum](#) summarizing the discretionary grant programs that may be most applicable to CRCOG is available for your review. The provided list is not exhaustive, and content is subject to change as more information is provided about each program.
 - U.S. DOT Application Checklist for FY2023 funding opportunities – a [pdf of the Application Checklist](#), and link to [U.S. DOT's webpage](#), is provided in the General Information section of the BIL Webpage.
- Future BIL/IIJA Programs to keep in mind:
 - **Reconnecting Communities** – Round 2 anticipated late Spring 2023

- **Bridge Investment Program** – Round 2 anticipated Summer 2023
- Please contact [Elizabeth Sanderson](#) with questions or to discuss these items further.

MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND ADMINISTRATION

- CRCOG is rolling out its **CRCOGWhat, CRCOGWho, CRCOGWhy** social media campaign to target the public and bring awareness to what we do and why it matters to our region. The campaign will highlight who, what, and why we do all of the impactful things we do to enhance our region.
- Along with Novus Insight and South Central Regional Council of Governments, CRCOG staff recently participated on a **Cybersecurity panel** at the CT Education Network Conference. Topics included insurance, best practices, and assistance available to municipalities.
- CRCOG staff has collected the latest parcel and CAMA data available from members and submitted them to CTOPM. Please contact Erik Snowden or Ryan Faulkner if you have questions.
- CRCOG staff served on the **CT Aerial Acquisition Committee**. Orthoimagery and lidar data was captured in April of 2023 and is currently being processed.
- The Finance Department has started preliminary audit work with CLA.
- The Capitol Region Purchasing Council (CRPC) is collecting quantities for **Treated Road Salt**. Quantities were due May 19th. If you did not submit quantities but would still like to participate, please contact Kim Bona ASAP! This bid will be issued on June 6 and is a **NO PIGGYBACKING BID** so you must submit quantities.
- The CRPC is currently reviewing proposals received for the **RFQ for Medical Services/Firefighter, DPW/DOT, Pre-Employment Physicals**. Once the review is completed, the results will be shared with members.
- CRCOG has fully executed the contract with **EPR Systems for Fire/EMS Records Management Software**. If you are interested in participating via a side letter agreement, please contact Kim Bona at kbona@crcog.org.
- On April 24, CRCOG convened a meeting of the **Central Connecticut Solid Waste Authority (CCSWA)**. Among other topics, Jim Frey of RRS and Debra Darby of TetraTech presented CRCOG's Waste Management and Diversion Study. Representatives of 12 CCSWA towns attended. CCSWA will resume regular meetings

and begin working to implement the recommendations outlined in the waste management study, with staff assistance provided by CRCOG.

- On March 28, 2023 CRCOG submitted a grant application to CTDEEP seeking funds to support a regional waste authority (RWA), with intentions to reconvene CCSWA, which has been on hiatus since late 2020. CTDEEP plans to announce funding awards in the coming months.
- CRCOG continues to await final execution of the grant award from HUD for the **\$2 million low-moderate income crumbling foundations remediation grant**.
- CRCOG continues to meet with towns to move forward with the **RPIP Grants** for Shared Building Official, Shared Assessment and Shared Animal Control. CRCOG is currently advertising for candidates to serve as **per diem Building Officials**. We are also looking for municipalities to participate in the Shared Assessment program and with other towns to discuss ACO Shared Services.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

- The **Transportation Committee** met on May 22. Staff updated the Committee on the following: Update to Regional Transportation Safety Plan, IIJA/BIL Update, Commuter Parking Lot Utilization, and Metropolitan Area Planning (MAP) Forum Spring Meeting. Transportation Committee recommended the following items for Policy Board approval: TIP Amendments, FY2024 and FY2025 Unified Planning Work Program, FY2024 and FY2025 CTDOT Planning Agreement, Annual Urban Planning Certification Resolution, and Resolution Authorizing Transportation Committee to Act as Policy Board.
- Staff submitted the finalized **2023-2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan** to CTDOT, FHWA, and FTA.
- CRCOG staff has prepared a **Unified Planning Work Program for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025**. This document outlines all transportation-related efforts that staff will undertake in those years. We will seek Policy Board approval of this document at the May meeting.
- CRCOG staff distributed a solicitation for **Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP)** in December 2022. CRCOG staff received 27 project applications from 22 municipalities. The solicitation includes \$33.8 million in funding, and \$57.7 million in applications have been received. CRCOG staff reviewed the applications, and draft rankings were endorsed by the Transportation Committee. We will request Policy Board approval of the rankings at the May meeting.

- Staff continues to advance the following studies: Capitol Region Roundabout Screening; Routes 190 and 220 Traffic Impact Study, Enfield; Farmington Area Connectivity Study; TOD Roles, Visioning, Viability, and Tools Analysis; Route 20 Corridor Study, Windsor Locks; and East Coast Greenway Gap Closure Study.
- The **Route 44 Corridor Study, Canton** is in the initiation phase. A top-ranked consultant has been identified, and fee negotiations have been sent to CTDOT for approval.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- Work on the FY 19 **State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP)** is complete; CRCOG has begun work on the FY 20 grant. All open grants include funds for training and exercise, contractual support and sustainment and maintenance of regional equipment. There are set asides for the Hartford Bomb Squad, Capitol Region HAZMAT team, and Metropolitan Medical Response System.
- CRCOG staff had the unique opportunity to serve as role players and evaluators in **West Hartford's Host Community Reception Center Drill** to support the town in its new role as a host community for the Millstone Nuclear Power Station. This large drill conducted on May 13^{also} involved personnel from FEMA, DEHMS, Millstone and DEEP.
- CRCOG staff participated in the Homeland Security Working Group meeting to determine projects and funding amounts for the FY 23 State Homeland Security Grant Program funds. Our **Metropolitan Medical Response System** project was once again selected for funding.
- CRCOG participated in the **CCM/DEMHS Annual Emergency Management Symposium**. Representatives from all Region 3 towns were present.
- CRCOG initiated weekly **Capitol Region Medical Reserve Corps** planning meetings for our NACCHO and Yale New Haven Health System grants.
- CRCOG began the planning process for the Annual Law Enforcement Day at **Camp Courant**.
- We kicked off the planning process for our 3rd annual **Region 3 CERT Field Day and Olympics**. We will hold the event on July 15th on the campus of Wesleyan University (home to our region's first campus CERT team).
- Conducted the initial planning meeting for our June 9th **Tabletop Exercise** based upon an anthrax scenario. All 14 local public health departments/districts in our region will participate.

- Conducted a **Capitol Region Special Weapons and Tactics Team Training Workshop**. 160 members from our 9 regional SWAT teams attended to hear presentations from CREST, NCEST and the FBI and conduct tactical exercises on Vehicle Assaults, Officer Down, Sniper Initiated HRT and an Open Area Search.

REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- As part of our partnership with CT Department of Public Health (DPH) on “**Active CT,**” staff has executed work orders for all Year 5 plans and demonstration projects:
 - Groton – in-person meeting held with City and consultant to review schedule and scope.
 - New Britain – will include a demonstration project on Arch Street to “test” upcoming LOTICP project work.
 - Torrington - demonstration project to improve pedestrian access to the shopping center and nearby future trail.
 - Windham – in-person meeting and site visit walk completed May 3 to discuss complete streets small area plan and trail striping plan.
 - Staff coordinating with BWCT to release a statewide survey on complete streets and create a repository of all complete streets plans and policies, bike/ped plans, and/or vision zero plans and policies.
- Staff continues conversations with member towns to pilot small scooter share programs this upcoming season. Additionally, CTDOT and Superpedestrian are finalizing the agreement to allow **CTDOT to access Mobility Data Specifications (MDS) data** and to enable them to create a platform for sharing the data with specified employees, including those in member communities.
- Staff has initiated the update of the region’s **2024 Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD)** and are holding weekly internal meetings.
 - An **online survey has been finalized** and is available on the POCD webpage.
 - Finalizing invites and logistics for themed focus groups to meet in June with experts in the fields of housing, governance, and environment.
 - Preparing for Advisory Committee meeting to be held on May 23.
- Staff continues to work with Sustainable CT to identify communities for the **affordable housing implementation pathways pilot project** available to Hartford Foundation for Public Giving (HFPG) communities. Project paused while SCT staff transitioned project management and resuming in June.
- CRCOG as the lead agency for the Hartford MSA, submitted a Notice of Intent to Participate for the **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Climate Pollution Reduction Grants Program**. Staff continues to work towards submission of the application by May 31.

- Staff formally executed our contract with CIRCA for the **Regional Natural Hazard Mitigation and Climate Action Plan** update as well as **Resilient 2.0**, which will be done concurrently. We are introducing CIRCA to our various boards and commissions and to town staff, including a presentation at our upcoming Planning & Development Forum.
- The position for **Principal Planner** is open until May 24 or until filled. In addition, our new summer intern started May 15 and we will be welcoming two new Sustainable CT Fellows for the summer as well beginning the first week of June.