

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Policy Board  
**From:** Matt Hart, Executive Director  
**CC:** CRCOG Staff  
**Meeting Date:** October 25, 2023  
**Subject:** Staff Reports

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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**

- Congratulations to our Policy Board Chair, Mayor Erin Stewart, and her husband Domenic on the birth of their son, Domenic 'Nicky' Thomas Mutone! We are pleased to hear that all are happy and well!
- Maura Cook, the Senior Vice President of Marketing & Development at the United Way of Central and Northeastern CT will be our guest speaker at the November 15 meeting of the Policy Board. Ms. Cook will present the United Way's latest ALICE report and review the Agency's rapid response to the increasing homelessness crisis.
- Thank you to all who volunteered to serve on CRCOG's *ad hoc* Legislative Committee charged with preparing CRCOG's Legislative Agenda for the upcoming session of the General Assembly. East Windsor First Selectman Jason Bowsza will serve as committee chair. We plan to hold our first meeting after the November elections and work to develop a proposed agenda to submit to the Policy Board in January.
- Congratulations to the 16 Connecticut Communities that were recently certified by Sustainable CT, and six municipalities that were recognized as Climate Leaders. The list includes Bolton, Granby, and Marlborough, which received their Bronze level certification, as well as Hartford and Manchester which were recognized as Climate Leaders. Our thanks to all CRCOG members that participate in the Sustainable CT program and work to make their communities more resilient, vibrant, and equitable places to live.

### **BIL/IIJA UPDATE**

- On October 18 CRCOG staff held an **Electric Vehicle Charging Station Seminar** at CRCOG's offices. The event featured guest presenters from Eversource and Weston & Sampson, and was well attended.
  - Funding Opportunities Newsletter, October Issue. Archived issues are available [here](#).

- Featured funding opportunities:
  - U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) **Thriving Communities Program** announced availability of up to \$22M for discretionary grants to fund Capacity Builder Teams to provide technical assistance, planning and other support to disadvantaged, rural, and tribal communities. Grant applications are due by November 28. Communities interested in receiving support from Capacity Builder Teams are invited to submit **Letters of Interest** by November 15.
  - Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) **Urban and Community Forestry Planning Grant Program** announced availability of \$150,000 in funding to support municipalities and non-profit organizations with efforts to inventory, plan, manage, and monitor urban and community forests. Grant applications are due October 24.
  - U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) **Electric Vehicle Charger Reliability and Accessibility Accelerator Grant** announced availability of \$100M in funding to improve reliability of existing electric vehicle infrastructure. Funds must be used to repair or replace existing publicly accessible Level 2 or Direct Current Fast Charging chargers that are broken or non-operational, per the National Renewable Energy Laboratory's (NREL's) list of **Alternative Fuels Station Locator**, as of October 11, 2023. There are twelve (12) publicly accessible Level 2 or DC Fast chargers within CRCOG that are "temporarily unavailable" and are highlighted **here**. State DOTs and local governments (including COGS) are eligible to apply.
  - Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) **National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Plan Formula Funding Opportunity** announced approximately \$15M in Formula Funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to implement the state's National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Plan. The state anticipates receiving approximately \$52M in Federal funding over a five-year period related to this Formula Program. This first round **grant solicitation** focuses on implementing Phase 1 of the NEVI Plan, which will strategically deploy Direct Current Fast Charging (DCFC) along designated Alternative Fuel Corridors (AFCs) to help build out the national electric AFC network. There are two priority zones within the CRCOG region – I91 in Hartford near exit 33 and I84 in Willington near exit 71. Applicants interested in submitting proposals for this grant are **required** to first submit an LOI, which are due no later than **5 pm on November 9, 2023**. Potential applicants can submit LOIs at any time within the open window. CTDOT expects the Request for Proposals (RFP) solicitation to be released in **January 2024**. Businesses, governmental entities, tribal governments, and utilities are eligible applicants.

- 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 its April 24 meeting, provides more information about this Project Screening effort.
- CRCOG staff continue to collaborate with representatives from multiple federal and state agencies and departments, including CTBILT, USDOT, FHWA, CTDOT, CTDEEP, 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:
  - Information about registering with SAM.gov and obtaining a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) necessary for applying for Federal assistance.
  - 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.
- BIL/IIJA Programs CRCOG is tracking:
  - **Bridge Investment Program** – Round 2 anticipated Summer 2023. CRCOG Staff have prepared [three static maps](#) and a [interactive online map](#) depicting bridges listed on the National Bridge Inventory that are rated in poor or fair condition, which may be eligible for funding.

Please contact [Elizabeth Sanderson](#) with questions or to discuss these items further.

## **ADMINISTRATION AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES**

- CRCOG continues its **CRCOGWhat, CRCOGWho, CRCOGWhy** social media campaign for the public to bring awareness to what we do and why it matters to our region. The campaign highlights who, what, and why we do all of the impactful things we do to enhance our region.
- CRCOG staff members continue in a leadership role to enhance cyber security in DEMHS Region 3. The Region 3 Cyber Security Task force met most recently on October 12.

- The Capitol Region Purchasing Council (CRPC) has issued bids for the following:
  - **Protective Clothing and Gear.** This bid will close on October 25, 2023.
  - The CRPC is currently collecting quantities for GASOLINE and Traffic Guidelines. **GASOLINE IS A NO PIGGYBACK BID, so be sure to submit quantities to Kim no later than October 18, 2023!**
  - The **CRPC** will hold its **Annual Meeting** on **Tuesday, October 24<sup>th</sup>** at the Glastonbury Riverfront Community Center, from 9am-12noon. Event announcement and registration has been emailed to members. Please register if you plan to attend.
  
- This fall CRCOG is rebidding ezIQC General Contracting and Road and Bridge Contracting Services. Staff held a mandatory pre-bid meeting on September 27. Bids **are** DUE ON October 26, 2023 @ 10AM!
  
- The **Central Connecticut Solid Waste Authority (CCSWA)** Executive Committee and Full Membership continue to meet regularly to implement organizational and programmatic recommendations outlined in the waste management study, including bylaw and concurrent ordinance review. CRCOG provides administration/staff support pursuant to an MOU. The CCSWA Executive Committee last met on October 16<sup>th</sup>.
  
- CRCOG continues to meet with CTDEEP in response to the agency's Request for Additional Information related to CRCOG's application for a Regional Waste Authority (RWA) Grant. CRCOG and additional COG applicants are meeting with CTDEEP in the coming weeks to discuss grant and funding options before CTDEEP makes its final awards.
  
- With robust attendance and interest, the Human Services Coordinating Council (HSCC) continues to meet regularly to discuss human services issues impacting our region. The next meeting of the HSCC will be held virtually on Tuesday, December 19 and will focus on homelessness and rising contributing factors. All CRCOG municipal members are encouraged to appoint a human services municipal representative to the HSCC and should contact CRCOG for additional information. Future meeting topics or questions from members may be submitted to [rnichols@crcog.org](mailto:rnichols@crcog.org).
  
- CRCOG GIS staff are continuing to develop a Regional Data Portal, incorporating and providing interactive mapping, data downloads, and project visualization to the public. Please email [GIS@crcog.org](mailto:GIS@crcog.org) for more information.
  
- CRCOG staff served on the **CT Aerial Acquisition Committee**. Orthoimagery and lidar data was captured in April of 2023 and the committee is evaluating pilot

data before continuing to process the data. Data delivery is expected by the end of the 2023 calendar year.

- CRCOG continues to expand its IT Shared Services Cooperative Purchasing programs, services, and enhancements, including online permitting, fiber/broadband, and VOIP services. Municipalities can leverage time, efficiencies, and pricing through a Side Letter to CRCOG Master Agreement. Any municipality interested in additional information on these programs should contact [rnichols@crcog.org](mailto:rnichols@crcog.org).
- CRCOG continues to work with the consultant and the Crumbling Foundations Solutions Indemnity Company (CFSIC) to implement the community funded HUD **\$2 million low-moderate income crumbling foundations remediation grant**.
- CRCOG continues to engage in discussions/meetings with members interested in Regional Performance Incentive Program (RPIP) grant funds for shared regional Building Official/Code Enforcement, Assessment, and Animal Control. CRCOG is actively seeking qualified candidates to serve as a full-time Building Official, with [applications](#) due in early November. CRCOG continues to seek participation from municipalities interested in Shared Assessment and Shared ACO. Please contact [pyoder@crcog.org](mailto:pyoder@crcog.org) for additional information.
- The Finance Department continues audit work with CLA, administering the many new grants received by CRCOG, and trying to fill an open accounting position.

## **TRANSPORTATION PLANNING**

- The **Transportation Committee** met on October 23. Staff updated the Committee on the following: 2024 Annual Safety Performance Targets, BIL/IIJA, LOTCIP Quarterly Report, CTDOT Complete Streets Controlling Design Criteria, and the Greater Hartford Mobility Study. CTDOT's Safe Routes to School Coordinator also gave a presentation to the Committee. The Committee recommended the following items for Policy Board approval: TIP Amendments and CRCOG Vision Zero Task Force Charter.
- CRCOG staff expects to distribute a solicitation for **Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTCIP)** no later than December 2023. The solicitation will include \$42 million in funding, and applications are anticipated to be due in February 2024. Additional details to follow when the solicitation is released.
- CRCOG executed agreements with FHWA and the City of New Britain related to CRCOG's Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant award. CRCOG staff can now proceed with the update of the **Regional Transportation Safety Plan**.

- Staff continues to advance the following **studies**: Capitol Region Roundabout Screening; Routes 190 and 220 Traffic Impact Study, Enfield; Farmington Area Connectivity Study; Route 20 Corridor Study, Windsor Locks; East Coast Greenway Gap Closure Study; and Route 44 Corridor Study, Canton.
- RFQs for **two new regional studies** are anticipated for release in Winter 2023/24: Regional Bicycle/Pedestrian Priority Network Plan and Regional Warehousing Land Use and Traffic Study.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

- CRCOG has begun work on the FY 20 **State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP)**. This program includes funds for training and exercise, contractual support, and sustainment and maintenance of regional equipment. There are set asides for the the Hartford Bomb Squad, Capitol Region HAZMAT team, and the Metropolitan Medical Response System.
- CRCOG's Public Safety team conducted a **Point of Dispensing Tabletop Exercise (TTX)** on September 29<sup>th</sup> at the Bloomfield Senior Center. We had a great turnout with all 14 local public health departments/districts in our region participating.
- CRCOG is currently hosting a regional CERT class at the CRCOG offices on Thursday evenings.
- CRCOG partnered with the West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District to provide a **flu shot clinic** for our employees.
- CRCOG staff once again assisted the TSA by providing role players for a full-scale emergency exercise at Tweed Airport.
- The Capital Region Emergency Planning Council (CREPC) held its quarterly meeting last week and received a briefing on the Statewide Emergency Planning & Preparedness Initiative (EPPI) exercise and a presentation from the CTDOT Office of Rails System Safety Coordinator.
- Last week CRCOG provided a Regional 3-day Incident Command System (ICS) 300 class at the CRCOG offices. An ICS 400 class is planned for early November.
- We continue to wind down the CAPTAIN Mobile Data Communications System.

## REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- RP&D recently posted for the position of an Environmental or Senior Environmental Planner. First review of resumes will begin on November 13.
- The 5-year grant funded project, “Active CT,” in partnership with CT Department of Public Health (DPH) officially closed September 29. We successfully closed out our remaining projects including a [two-day “quick build” demonstration project in New Britain at the end of September](#). Final close out and reporting activities continue.

Also, as part of this grant, we completed a statewide survey on complete streets (receiving over 700 responses) and will be creating a repository of all complete streets plans and policies, bike/ped plans, and/or vision zero plans and policies.

- Staff has initiated the update of the region’s **2024 Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD)** and are holding weekly internal meetings.
  - Our online survey closed September 30. Approximately 350 responses (once spam replies were removed) were submitted.
  - We have launched “Table Talk,” an opportunity for hosts to be compensated for efforts to hold small group conversations about POCD related topics. Two Table Talks have occurred and 8 more hosts are registered.
  - Staff have been attending community events over the summer to inform the POCD update. We estimate a reach of approximately 1,000+ people at 13 events.
  - Staff hosted a housing focus group/forum on September 26 at the Lyceum with 30+ attendees.
  - Our next Advisory Committee meeting will be held October 25.
- CRCOG continues as the lead agency for the Hartford MSA on the **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Climate Pollution Reduction Grants Program**. Responses were due October 5. CRCOG received 10 submissions and will be interviewing 4 responding teams the week of October 23. Staff continues to meet bi-weekly with other COGs and regular coordination calls with EPA and the State.
- CIRCA and staff continue to work on the **Regional Natural Hazard Mitigation and Climate Action Plan** update as well as **Resilient 2.0**, which are being completed concurrently. A second workshop was held for municipal staff on October 3 and two public meetings were held (hybrid and virtual options) on October 9 and 12. Drafting of the plan update has begun.
- CRCOG staff is preparing the grant application for new assessment funds for the regional **Brownfields Program** due in November.

- The Policy Board endorsed the regional **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs)** at its September 27 meeting.
- Staff continued its municipal outreach efforts, meeting with Mansfield on September 28.
- The period of performance for the EDA CARES grant ended September 30 and all funds have been expended. Staff nearing finalization of a Municipal and Small Business Resource Center on the CRCOG website to be published later this month.
- Staff attended the Southern New England American Planning Association (SNEAPA) annual conference on October 5 and 6. Staff also attended and presented at the CT WTS annual “mini-series” on October 18.