

## **Priority Climate Action – Municipal Input Requested**

**To:** CRCOG Policy Board  
**From:** Kyle Shiel, Principal Planner  
**CC:** Matt Hart, Executive Director;  
Caitlin Palmer, Director of Regional Planning & Development  
**Date:** December 7, 2023  
**Subject:** Municipal input for Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP)

**Introduction:** CRCOG and RiverCOG are developing a Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP) for the Hartford-East Hartford-Middletown Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which is the first deliverable for the larger Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program. The PCAP must be submitted to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by March 1, 2024 and is intended to focus on near-term, implementation-ready greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction measures. The PCAP is intended to directly inform the implementation phase of the CPRG program and should contain strategies and potential projects for municipalities and other regional stakeholders to reduce GHG emissions.

**Why We Need Your Input:** In September, EPA released a [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) for the Implementation phase of the CPRG program, offering \$4.6 billion in competitive funding to eligible applicants to implement GHG reduction measures (“Projects”) identified in Priority Climate Action Plans. CRCOG (with RiverCOG) intends to apply for implementation funding, ideally assembling the broadest possible coalition of municipalities within the Hartford-East Hartford-Middletown MSA in order to create a competitive application. It is critical we collectively identify the most viable opportunities as early as possible in order to complete the significant amount of work the application requires.

**Municipalities wishing to apply for these funds must have their potential Projects identified in the Priority Climate Action for their respective region**, so it is important to provide input well before the PCAP is finalized and submitted to EPA by the March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. Implementation applications are due April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, one month after the PCAP is submitted.

**Requested Action from Municipalities:** CRCOG and RiverCOG are asking municipalities to fill out a brief [survey](#) on potential implementation projects to include in the PCAP. Staff in Public Works, Engineering, Facilities Management, Planning and others working on sustainability or energy efficiency would be appropriate designees to complete this survey. Due to the size of our region and the compressed EPA timeline for PCAP and Implementation application submissions, this is the most expeditious way for us to gather municipal input.

**Preparing for Implementation Grants:** After municipal survey responses are submitted, CRCOG and RiverCOG propose to coordinate one or more workshops among interested parties to begin narrowing down specific Projects for CPRG implementation funding. Due to the multiple competing factors to consider for an application, active engagement from our municipal partners and other stakeholders during this process will be critical.

We anticipate conducting at least 1-2 virtual stakeholder meetings between now and the end of the year. We plan to hold a larger in-person meeting in early January.

**Next Steps:**

- 1) To ensure eligibility for CPRG implementation funding, please submit the included [survey](#) by **Friday December 22<sup>nd</sup>**.
- 2) We encourage staff with grant responsibilities to review the CPRG implementation grant [NOFO](#) and proactively reach out to CRCOG and RiverCOG staff with any questions or concerns.
- 3) Stay tuned for future meeting invitations in the near future and please have a representative from your staff team plan to attend.

If you have any questions, please contact Principal Planner and CPRG Project Manager Kyle Shiel at [kshiel@crcog.org](mailto:kshiel@crcog.org) or (860) 724-4706.

## **FAQs: CPRG Implementation Grants**

### **How Much Funding is available?**

\$4.3 billion for state, local governments and tribes.

### **What are the Program Objectives?**

- 1) Implement ambitious measures that will significantly reduce cumulative greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions by 2030 and beyond.
- 2) Achieve substantial community benefits, particularly in low-income and disadvantaged communities.
- 3) Complement other funding sources to maximize these GHG reductions and community benefits.
- 4) Pursue innovative policies and programs that are replicable and can be “scaled up” across multiple jurisdictions.

### **What Type of Projects Can Be Funded?**

See Appendix A for some examples. CPRG implementation funds can be used in three ways: 1) A new, stand-alone measure implemented solely through CPRG funding; 2) Expansion of a measure already being implemented, with expansion funded through CPRG funding; and, 3) A new measure with secured partial funding with the additional CPRG funding filling the gap to fully implement the measure.

### **Who Can Apply for Funding?**

- Lead organizations for the Planning Grant (CRCOG for the Hartford MSA)
- A municipality (to implement measures included in the PCAP)
- A Coalition of Eligible Applicants – This could consist of two or more eligible applicants, such as State agencies, Councils of Governments, multiple municipalities jointly applying to implement one or more measures from the applicable PCAP.

### **Why Coordination is Essential – EPA will:**

- *Not* award no more than two grants to applicants at the same level of government within a single jurisdiction (e.g., a single state or municipality).
- Make selections to ensure diverse geographic coverage of CPRG implementation funding across the different funding tiers.
- *Not* award multiple grants to implement the same measure in the same location.  
**EPA strongly recommends entities communicate and coordinate prior to submitting applications.**

**Key Dates:**

- **Early January 2024:** In-person meeting among Hartford MSA stakeholders  
(Date/location TBD)
- **Mid-January 2024:** Public presentation of PCAP draft and public comment period
- **February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024:** Optional Notice of Intent to Apply deadline for implementation funding
- **March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024:** Priority Climate Action Plans due
- **April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024:** Implementation Application deadline
- **July 2024:** Notification of Awards
- **October 2024:** Funds Awarded

<b>Planning &amp; Implementation Application Timeline</b>					
	December	January	February	March	April
<b>PCAP</b>	Ongoing engagement Plan development & analysis	PCAP Draft Review & Public Comment	Finalize PCAPs	<b>PCAP Due March 1</b>	-
<b>Implementation Applications</b>	Narrow down list after analysis	Identify projects & applications	Developing applications		<b>Implementation Application Due April 1</b>

Table 1 - Preparing the PCAP and Implementation application will by necessity be a parallel process, due to the accelerated timeline required by EPA. Active engagement from municipal stakeholders from December through January will be critical for appropriate coordination.

## **Appendix A: Examples of Potential Implementation Projects**

### **GHG Reduction Measure Examples (from [NOFO](#)):**

*“Drawing on a variety of information – including workplans submitted by CPRG planning grantees, measures highlighted in the CPRG Request for Information, and input received during CPRG stakeholder listening sessions – EPA has prepared the following illustrative list of potential GHG reduction measures for which applicants may choose to seek CPRG implementation grant funding. This list is neither exhaustive nor definitive with respect to the measures that may be included in competitive applications under this NOFO. Applicants should consider the evaluation criteria in Section V.A when deciding on which measure or measures to include in their applications.”*

### **Transportation Sector**

- Programs to increase the share of electric light-, medium-, and heavy-duty vehicles, and to expand electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- Electrification requirements for state, municipal, territorial, and tribal vehicle, transit, or equipment fleets
- Transportation pricing programs that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), such as parking pricing and congestion and road pricing.
- Policies to support transportation management incentive programs to reduce vehicle trips or travel and expand transit use, such as van-pool programs, ridesharing, transit fare subsidies, and bicycle facilities.
- New or expanded transportation infrastructure projects to facilitate public transit, micro-mobility, car sharing, bicycle, and pedestrian modes.
- Incentive programs to purchase zero-emission vehicles and equipment to replace older heavy-duty diesel vehicles and equipment.
- Programs to increase efficiency and reduce GHG emissions at ports and freight terminals, such as vehicle or equipment idle reduction, vessel-speed reduction, equipment electrification, and shore power.
- Update building and zoning codes to encourage walkable, bikeable, and transit-oriented development.
- Encourage mode shift from private vehicles to walking, biking, and public transportation (e.g., complete streets, bike share programs, bike storage facilities, low-speed electric bicycle subsidies, public transit subsidies)

## **Electric Power Sector**

- Installation of renewable energy and energy storage systems on municipal facilities
- Programs to support smart-grid and/or behind-the-meter technologies to reduce power losses, reduce peak demand, and enable consumer participation in distributed generation.
- Targeted incentives for installation of renewable energy and energy storage systems on commercial and residential buildings, such as net metering, tax credits, rebates, and streamlined interconnection standards.
- Policies and measures to streamline permitting for renewable energy projects.
- Development of distributed or community-scale renewable energy generation, microgrids, or vehicle-to-grid infrastructure in disadvantaged communities, including remote and rural regions

## **Buildings Sector**

- Adoption and implementation of the most up-to-date building energy codes or stretch codes for new commercial and residential buildings.
- Implementation of a clean heat standard
- Incentive programs for implementation of end-use energy efficiency measures in existing government-owned, commercial, and residential buildings
- Incentive programs for the purchase of certified energy-efficient appliances, heating and cooling equipment, lighting, and building products to replace inefficient products.
- Programs and policies to promote electrification of government-owned, commercial, and residential buildings.
- Programs and policies to accelerate the incorporation of efficient electric technologies and electric vehicle charging at new single-family, multi-unit, or affordable residential buildings and commercial buildings, including building codes related to electric vehicle charging.
- Implementation of a building energy performance management program for government-owned buildings
- Implementation of a new benchmarking and building performance standards
- Programs to promote recovery and destruction of high-global warming potential (GWP) hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) used in existing appliances, air conditioning systems, and commercial chillers.

## **Industrial Sector**

- Programs to develop, expand, and support markets for low-embodied carbon materials and products, such as cement and steel.

## **Waste, Water, and Sustainable Materials Management Sector**

- Standards and incentives to reduce methane emissions from landfills and wastewater treatment facilities, including through collection for use or destruction.
- Programs and incentives to reduce or divert waste (including food and/or yard waste) through improved production practices, improved collection services, and increased reuse or recycling rates.
- Programs and incentives to reduce GHG emissions associated with plastics production, use, and waste management.
- Programs to expand composting and bio-digestion infrastructure to reduce GHG emissions and increase beneficial use of organic waste.
- Policies and programs to reduce construction and demolition waste through building reuse, deconstruction, and material diversion and reuse.
- Installation of renewable energy and energy efficiency measures at wastewater treatment facilities

## **Agricultural Sector**

- Incentive programs to fund electric agricultural equipment technologies.
- Incentives for technologies and techniques that reduce nitrous oxide emissions from fertilizer application.
- Incentives to promote anaerobic digesters to capture methane and generate renewable energy or produce renewable fuel.

## **Carbon Removal Measures**

- Policies to promote improved forest management to enhance carbon stocks on forested land.
- Urban afforestation and green infrastructure programs and projects
- Restoration of degraded lands (e.g., brownfields, mine reclamation) and forested lands to enhance carbon sequestration.
- Policies to enhance carbon stocks in coastal estuaries, such as wetlands and mangroves.