

MEMORANDUM

To: Policy Board
From: Matt Hart, Executive Director
CC: CRCOG Staff
Meeting Date: June 26, 2024
Subject: Staff Reports

Below please find our staff report for the Board's information. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- *CRCOG Annual Meeting* – I would like to thank everyone who attended our 50th annual meeting, held this year on June 5 at BLDG 4 in Manchester. I would like to thank Mayor Jay Moran for his warm welcome, and Mayor Stewart for serving as cohost. Anthony Anthony, the state's Chief Marketing Officer, did a great job as our guest speaker. My thanks also to our staff team led by Aaliyah Miller and Laura Frankowski for the excellent job that they did coordinating this event. We're looking forward to meeting in New Britain in 2025!
- *Connecticut Main Street Center Awards of Excellence* – I was pleased to attend the CMSC Awards for Excellence held on June 18 in Downtown Norwich. Congratulations to all the award winners, including State Rep. Eleni Kavros DeGraw and Cynthia van Zelm, former Executive Director of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, from our region!
- *September 25, 2024 Policy Board Meeting* – Our next Policy Board meeting is scheduled for 12PM on September 25. As this date conflicts with the annual ICMA conference I will coordinate with our chair to schedule a special meeting for September. I hope that you all have a wonderful summer!

BIL/IIJA UPDATE

- *BIL Workshop Series – Stormwater Management*. CRCOG and Weston & Sampson collaborated to bring our members a free educational session about stormwater low impact development best management practices. The workshop was well attended by representatives from municipalities throughout the region. A recording of the workshop is available on CRCOG's YouTube site [here](#). Please help us plan future events and complete this [survey](#).
- *Discretionary Grant Awards in CRCOG* – CRCOG staff continues to assist member municipalities with applying for Federal funding. View CRCOG's [interactive online](#)

[map of discretionary grant awards](#), which depicts 20 discretionary grants awarded to bring \$56 million to the region.

- *New Funding Opportunities* – View the [May Edition](#) of CRCOG’s Funding Opportunities Newsletter; below are new opportunities since the last edition, and reminders about popular programs while opportunities remain open:
 - U.S. DOT FHWA **[Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grant Program \(CFI\) - Round 2 is now open](#)**, which makes **\$1.3B** available for deploying publicly accessible electric vehicle (EV) and other alternative fuel charging infrastructure. New applications are due **August 28**.
 - U.S. DOT **[Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation \(SMART\)](#)** - This grant opportunity is back again, view CRCOG’s summary of last year’s solicitation [here](#), for reference. Applications for Stage 1 grants will be accepted until **July 12**. Applicants must have received a Stage 1 grant to apply for Stage 2.
 - U.S. DOT **[Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\)](#)** – Applications for FY2024 are now being accepted. The program funds projects that will prevent deaths and serious injuries on roadways. Applications for Planning and Demonstration Grants will be accepted until **August 29, 2024**, if funding remains following the first two cohorts.
 - U.S. DOT **[Bridge Investment Program](#)** – Applications for this funding opportunity will be accepted on a **rolling basis**. Bridges/culverts must be listed on the National Bridge Inventory to be eligible for this funding source, which seeks to improve bridges rated in poor or fair condition. Upcoming deadlines include: **August 1** for Large Bridges (over \$100M); **October 1** for Planning Grants; and **November 1** for Bridge Projects (\$100M or less).
- Tools for Rural communities:
 - [U.S. DOT Funding Opportunities for Rural Projects](#)
 - [National Center for Rural Road Safety Key Funding Opportunities](#)
- *Project Screening* - CRCOG is seeking to learn more about **priority projects in your municipality** so we may assist with connecting projects with available federal funding opportunities. Contact [Elizabeth Sanderson](#) to learn more.
- *Collaboration with Other Agencies* - CRCOG staff continue to collaborate with representatives from Federal and State agencies and departments to review funding opportunities and coordinate efforts.
- *Additional Resources* - Visit CRCOG’s [BIL/IIJA webpage](#) for information about federal programs and general information, including:

- Registering with SAM.gov and obtaining a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) necessary for applying for Federal assistance (formerly DUNS) (see the General Information section)
- CRCOG's [Memorandum](#) summarizing discretionary grant programs most applicable in our region. The provided list is not exhaustive, and content is subject to change as more information is provided about each program.
- *Schedule of U.S. DOT Funding Opportunities* - View U.S. Department of Transportation's (U.S. DOT) Key Notice of Funding Opportunities schedule for 2024 [here](#).

ADMINISTRATION AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES

- The CRPC is accepting **new members for the Energy Consortium**. If interested in participating, please reach out to kbona@crcog.org **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!** **Reverse Auction is slated for early fall, and we need to collect participating towns' account information for the energy consultant in advance.**
- As part of the DEEP Recreational Trails Grants announced on June 3rd, CRCOG will be a recipient of an equipment sharing grant across 4 towns and Riverfront Recapture.
- The CRPC Treated Road Salt bid was issued on June 6, 2024. This bid will closed on June 24, 2024. If you did not submit quantities, please contact kbona@crcog.org as soon as possible. **NOTE: This is a NON-PIGGYBACKING BID so quantities must be submitted to participate.**
- The CRPC is currently collecting quantities for Snowplow Blades and Supplies. This bid will be issued on June 26th. Questions? Please contact Kim at kbona@crcog.org.
- CRCOG staff members continue in a leadership role to enhance cyber security in DEMHS Region 3. CRCOG staff held its regularly scheduled bimonthly virtual meeting on June 13, 2024. Please contact Erik Snowden, esnowden@crcog.org for more information.
- The **Central Connecticut Solid Waste Authority (CCSWA) Executive Committee** met virtually on May 20, 2024 to approve amendments to CCSWA Bylaws and the Concurrent Ordinance in CCSWA's 14 member municipalities. Additionally, projects related to CCSWA membership, marketing, website development, and organics are underway. Both the Executive Committee and Full Membership met on Monday, June 17th, 2024 – discussion items included: 2024 Budget Approval, Bylaws and Enabling Ordinance for Municipal Leaders, RFI (Food

Waste/Organics), and SB 191 – Food Scrap Diversion legislation.

- CRCOG continues to work collaboratively with DEEP to finalize contracting for a \$570,000 Regional Waste Authority (RWA) grant. The intent is to execute the grant agreement and secure the funding in July 2024.
- The **Human Services Coordinating Council (HSCC)** met virtually on June 18, 2024. The HSCC meets as a roundtable discussion; this discussion focused on housing “un”affordability and insecurity in our region. Speakers included: Russell Hansen (United Way) – Director of Impact and Engagement Operations, John Harkins (Rome Smith Kowalski) – Legislative Consultant, and Ben Lovejoy (DOH) – Office of Policy, Research and Housing Support. The HSCC meets again on September 17, 2024 (possible topic: Fair Rent Commissions). We encourage all member towns to participate in the HSCC. Please contact rnichols@crcog.org if you have topics for future discussion and/or would like to join.
- CRCOG GIS staff are continuing to develop our Regional Data Portal, which incorporates interactive mapping, data downloads, and project visualization for the public. Please email GIS@crcog.org for more information.
- CRCOG’s GIS team continues to provide project mapping data through the CRCOG Regional Data Portal.
- CRCOG staff and several municipal volunteers are continuing quality checks on the **CT Aerial Acquisition** Orthoimagery and lidar data that was captured in April 2023. CRCOG staff serves on the project planning committee and data delivery is expected by mid-late 2024.
- CRCOG’s IT Shared Services Cooperative Purchasing programs, services, and enhancements is renewing and/or extending agreements with many of our valued partners, including online permitting (OpenGov/ICC-CDS (Municipity), fiber optics/broadband (Sertex), voice over internet protocol (VOIP) (IPGenie), general IT consulting services (Novus Insight), and time and attendance software (Andrews Technology). If you are interested in participating in any of CRCOG’s IT Shared Services, please contact Robyn Nichols at rnichols@crcog.org.
- CRCOG on boarded one full-time employee, one part-time, and one summer intern from May to June.
- Finance is preparing for the fiscal year end and the upcoming audit.

- Staff continue to work on the HUD Gap Funding for Crumbling Foundations and the Crumbling Foundations Testing Program. Please contact Pauline Yoder at pyoder@crcog.org for additional information on these programs.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

- The **Transportation Committee** met on June 24. Staff updated the Committee on the following: Alcohol Impaired Driving Data; New Staff Introduction: Thomas Borden; BIL Update; and Draft RFQ: Traffic Services On-Call Lists. The Committee recommended the following items for Policy Board approval: TIP Amendments; Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP): Priority Projects; Resolution: Capitol Region Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Network Plan; and Resolution: Shared Micromobility Services Contract.
- CRCOG received seven (7) project applications for **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)** funding for on-and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, multi-use trail projects, and safe routes to school projects. There is **\$12.7 million in federal funding** available for CRCOG projects (\$15.9 million total project funding). The prioritized list of projects is before the Policy Board this month.
- CRCOG staff continue to coordinate with FHWA and the City of New Britain to proceed with the update of the **Regional Transportation Safety Plan**, which will be funded by CRCOG's Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant award. Consultant negotiations are underway. A meeting of the **Vision Zero Task Force** was held on June 18.
- Interviews for consultant assistance have been conducted, and negotiations are underway for assistance with the **Regional Bicycle/Pedestrian Priority Network Plan**.
- Staff is reviewing responses to the RFQ for consultant assistance with the **Regional Warehousing Land Use and Traffic Study**. Interviews are anticipated for July.
- Staff continues to advance the following studies: Capitol Region Roundabout Screening; Farmington Area Connectivity Study; East Coast Greenway Gap Closure Study; and Route 44 Corridor Study, Canton.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- CRCOG hosted a **FEMA 402 Class – National Incident Management System Overview for Senior Officials** (Executives, Elected and Appointed) for Policy Board members on May 24th. This was the first time the class was held in CT and the DEMHS training manager and staff joined in. It was well received and CRCOG will add it to our regular training offerings.

- CRCOG staff members are winding down work on the FY 20 **State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP)** and have begun work on the FY 21 grant. This program includes funds for training and exercise, contractual support, and maintenance of regional equipment. There are set asides for the Hartford Bomb Squad, Capitol Region HAZMAT team, and the Metropolitan Medical Response System.
- Recent equipment purchases through the SHSGP grant include new suits for the Capitol Region Dive Team, a Bomb Squad vehicle, upgrades to our Salamander accountability system and upgrades to the Manchester Bearcat – one of our 3 regional units.
- CRCOG hosted an **(ICS) 300** class for public health professionals at our offices for 3 days in late May and we are planning for additional 300 and 400 classes in the coming months.
- CRCOG staff participated in the 2024 Statewide Governor’s Emergency Planning and Preparedness Initiative by assisting in monitoring the Region 3 towns at the State Emergency Operation Center.
- CRCOG kicked off planning for **Project Public Health Ready (PPHR) application process**. To advance this work we have established a Steering Committee and three working groups, one for each of the 3 PPHR Goals, and have asked our 14 local health departments/districts to assign team members.
- The **Capitol Region Citizen Corps Council** took part in the statewide CERT Saturday in early June. The next bimonthly meeting will be held on July 8th. Teams continue to train and build upon their missions. CRCOG conducted its 3rd regional CERT class and is planning additional classes for the future.
- The **CTDEMHS Region 3 Cyber Security Task Force** holds bi-monthly meetings providing federal and state cyber briefings, information sharing opportunities, and a forum for IT managers in the region. The next meeting will be held on June 13, 2024.
- CRCOG continues to meet with the Town of Newington about conducting a potential regional **Full-scale exercise involving CTfastrak**.

REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- Kim Bishop, our **Economic Development Coordinator**, has hit the ground running. She is organizing a meeting of the CRCOG Foundation, developing a committee structure to support the implementation of our regional Comprehensive

Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), and attending events such as the Bowfield Green groundbreaking in Windsor.

- CRCOG's new **Sustainable CT** Fellows – [Adrian Hug](#) and [Brett Hurley](#) - are busy scheduling meetings with member towns, including Coventry, Plainville, West Hartford, Rocky Hill, Granby, Mansfield, Suffield, and Marlborough. Member towns can reach out to the Fellows check SCT membership, certification status, and see how our Fellows can help communities achieve or renew SCT certifications.
- Staff is making the following progress on the update to the region's **2024 Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD)**:
 - Hosted a POCD workshop for Policy Board members on May 22 and have worked to integrate comments into the latest version
 - Provided comments to the design consultant and working on final edits, graphics, etc.
 - Hosted a virtual meeting for interested towns to learn about the **State's POCD with OPM** on June 12
- CRCOG continues as the lead agency for the Hartford MSA on the **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Climate Pollution Reduction Grants Program**.
 - Our Sustainable CT Fellows working on a cohort project to better understand the current status of towns efforts regarding composting and organics diversion. A survey will be developed later this summer and we're asking all towns to complete the survey.
 - Finalizing the CCAP engagement strategy and beginning to adapt Table Talk for CCAP.
 - Coordinating with Green Bank and all coalition COGs to sign the implementation grant MOU, due to EPA July 1.
- 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.
 - CRCOG conducted additional outreach with interested towns for additional technical assistance from CIRCA. Commitments to work with East Hartford, Hartford, and a joint project between Newington and Berlin.
 - Submitted revised plan to FEMA based on their comments, expecting approval in the coming weeks and then will be looking to towns for local endorsements.
- Staff released an RFQ for the **Warehousing Land Use and Transportation Impact Study** with responses due June 14. We are working to review the submissions we received.

- Received three vendor submissions in response to our **Regional Micromobility** RFP and held interviews and product demonstrations on May 31. We are submitting a resolution to Policy Board to approve the selection of our top-rated vendor and enter into contract with Veo.

- Staff continues working with our communities and EPA on our **MetroHartford Brownfield's Program**.
 - While CRCOG was not awarded a new round of Assessment funds, we were awarded an **additional \$1M in EPA Supplemental Funds** for our RLF program. We have submitted the required award paperwork to EPA and new workplan.
 - Staff has finalized a “decision document” certifying the work in Norwich as eligible activities and will be disbursing the loan.
 - Staff issued an “approval to commence work” letter to Arrowhead Gateway partners and is working to finalize underwriting of the loan and the loan agreement.
 - Staff attended the annual EPA Brownfields Conference in Portland, ME.