

2012 Annual Report

July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012



SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

127 Washington Avenue, 4th Floor West, North Haven, CT 06473

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Council Members (January 2012)

Bethany	FS Derrylyn Gorski
Branford	FS Anthony DaRos
East Haven	Mayor Joseph Maturo, Jr.
Guilford	FS Joseph Mazza
Hamden	Mayor Scott Jackson
Madison	FS Fillmore McPherson
Meriden	Mayor Michael Rohde
Milford	Mayor Benjamin Blake
New Haven	Mayor John DeStefano, Jr.
North Branford	Mayor Anthony Candelora
North Haven	FS Michael Freda
Orange	FS James Zeoli
Wallingford	Mayor William Dickinson, Jr.
West Haven	Mayor John Picard
Woodbridge	FS Edward M. Sheehy

Retiring Council Members (January 2012)

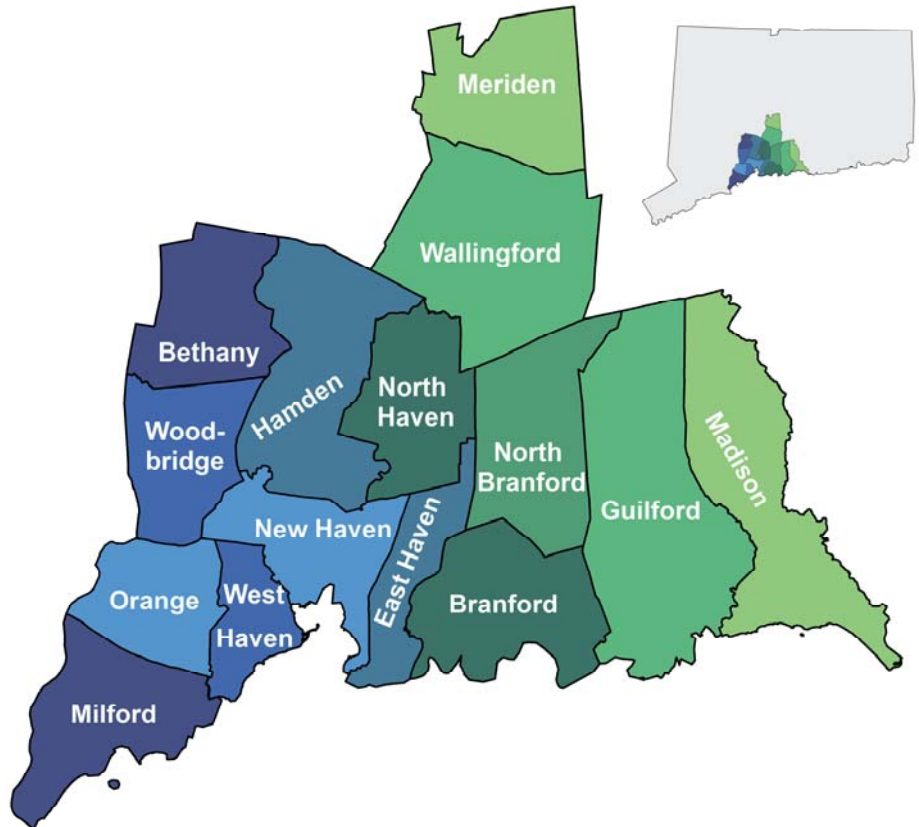
East Haven	Mayor April Capone Almon
Milford	Mayor James Richetelli, Jr.

SCRCOG Staff (January 2012)

Carl Amento	Executive Director
Albert Ruggiero	Business Manager
Stephen Dudley	Sr. Transportation Planner
James Rode	Transportation Planner
Eugene Livshits	Regional Planner
Christopher Rappa	Sustainability Planner

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INTRODUCTION

This report highlights the major activities of the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) during the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

Composed of the chief elected officials from the fifteen member communities (see map above), SCRCOG provides a forum to foster communication and collaboration among its member municipalities in identifying and addressing regional issues.

SCRCOG's responsibilities include developing a regional transportation work program, maintaining a regional plan of conservation and development, and reviewing land use changes that affect member municipalities. Additionally, SCRCOG provides a meeting location for various collaborative municipal actions.

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS (JANUARY 2012)

Officers & Executive Committee

First Selectman Anthony DaRos - *Chairman*
 Mayor John Picard - *Vice Chair*
 Mayor Scott Jackson- *Secretary*
 First Selectman Michael Freda - *Treasurer*
 First Selectman Edward M. Sheehy
 Mayor John DeStefano, Jr.
 First Selectwoman Derrylyn Gorski
 Mayor William Dickinson, Jr.

Transportation Committee

Mayor William Dickinson, Jr. - *Chairman*
 Mayor John DeStefano, Jr.
 First Selectman Anthony DaRos
 First Selectman Fillmore McPherson
 First Selectman Joseph Mazza
 Mayor Benjamin Blake
 Mayor Michael S. Rohde

Regional Planning Commission

Bethany	Mary Shurtleff
Branford	R. Charles Andres
East Haven	David Anderson
Guilford	Peter Goletz
Hamden	Richard Szczyppek
Madison	Christopher Traugh
Meriden	David White
Milford	Susan Shaw
New Haven	Kevin DiAdamo
North Branford	Francis Lescovich
North Haven	Vacant
Orange	Paul Kaplan
Wallingford	James Fitzsimmons
West Haven	Vacant
Woodbridge	Peggy Rubens-Duhl

Technical Committee

Bethany	Alan Green
Branford	Janice Plaziak
East Haven	James Staunton
Guilford	James Portley
Hamden	Robert Brinton
Madison	Michael Ott
Meriden	Pierre Blanchet
Milford	Gary Wassmer
New Haven	Richard Miller
North Branford	Kurt Weiss
North Haven	Jonathan Bodwell
Orange	Edwin Lieberman
Wallingford	John Thompson
West Haven	Abdul Quadir
Woodbridge	Warren Connors

REGIONAL PLANNING PROGRAM

Land Use Referrals

SCRCOG coordinates and provides staff support to the Regional Planning Commission (RPC). The RPC meets monthly and provides advisory reviews of proposed changes to land use regulations, maps, developments near municipal boundaries, and updates to municipal plans of conservation and development. From July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012, the RPC reviewed sixty-two land use referrals.

U.S. Census

SCRCOG continues to serve as a resource for its member municipalities and constituents with data provided by the U. S. Census Bureau. *2010 Census* statistics and social, economic, housing, and demographic estimates, generated by the *2006-2010 American Community Survey (ACS)*, have been released by the United States Census Bureau. Upon request, SCRCOG staff offers assistance to ensure that this region is accurately counted, represented, and given the financial resources applicable to its population.

Emergency Preparedness

SCRCOG continues to serve as the financial administrator for the New Haven Area Special Hazards Team (NHASH) with regards to Federal Homeland Security Grants. NHASH is one of five regional hazardous materials teams in the state recognized by the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

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REGIONAL PLANNING PROGRAM

Sustainable Communities Planning Grant

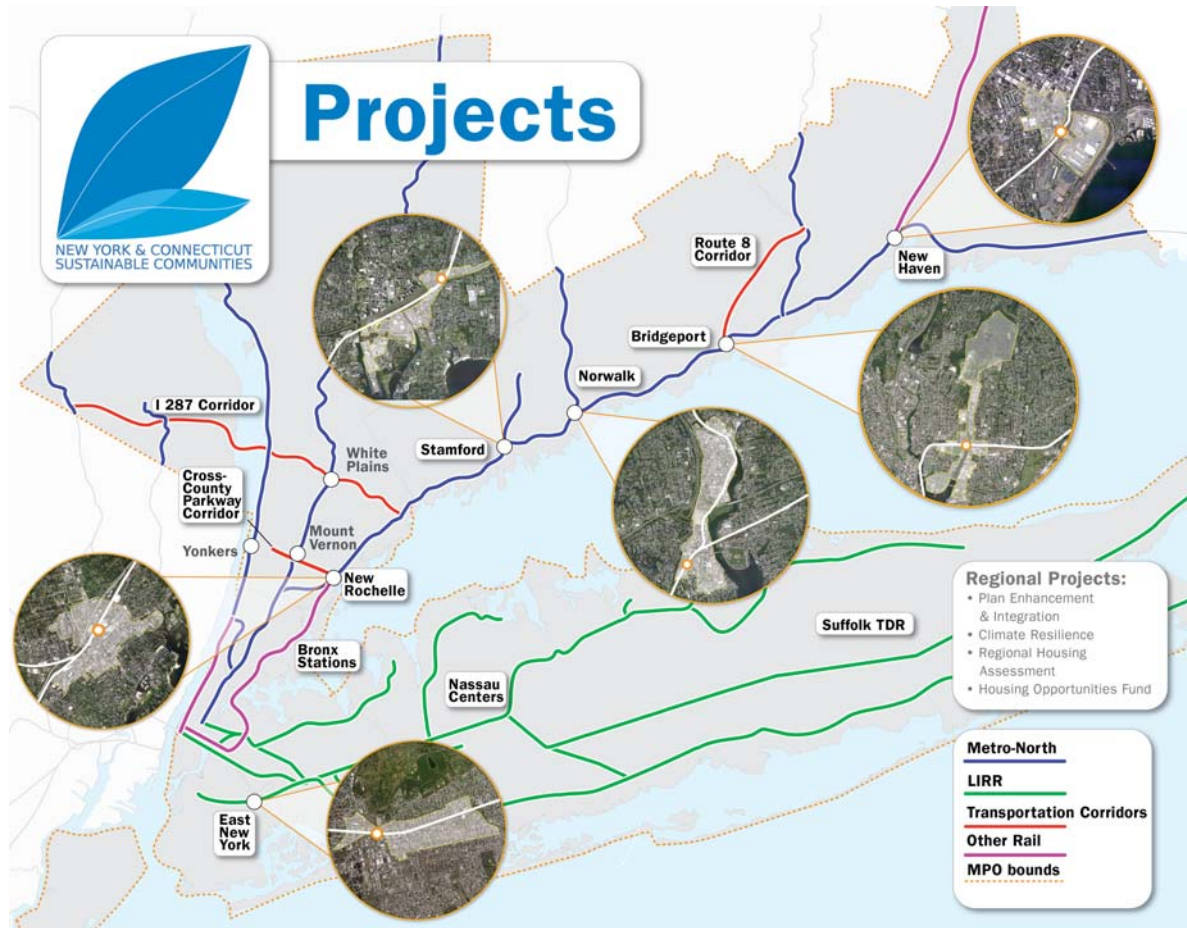
As part of the *Plan Enhancement and Integration* component of the Sustainable Communities Grant, SCRC-OG staff reviewed existing regional plans and municipal plans of conservation and development. The purpose of this review was to begin to identify where “gaps” may exist between the goals, objectives, and policies (of the plans) and the Livability Principles defined by the Federal Partnership for Sustainable Communities and additional “issue areas” identified by the New York-Connecticut Sustainable Communities Consortium.

Livability Principles:

- Provide more transportation choices
- Promote equitable, affordable housing
- Enhance economic competitiveness
- Support existing communities
- Coordinate policies and leverage investment
- Value communities and neighborhoods

“Issue Areas”:

- Water/Solid Waste
- Land Use/Open Space
- Public Participation
- Energy/Climate Change
- Demographic Changes



Source: <http://www.sustainablenyct.org/library/img/SC-Projects.jpg>

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REGIONAL PLANNING PROGRAM

Sustainable Communities Planning Grant (continued from previous page)

In addition to the region-wide projects, there are several place-based projects (see map on previous page). The place-based project in the South Central Region is focused on New Haven's Union Station. The goal of the project is to develop a mixed-use, transit-oriented community. Below is a map depicting the location of New Haven's Union Station.

In January 2012, the Consortium issued a request for proposals seeking a consultant or teams of consultants with expertise in socio-economic analysis, market analysis, architecture, marketing, planning, and public involvement to advance pre-development planning for mixed-use development on existing surface parking lots adjacent to New Haven's Union Station. The project selection committee (Committee) for the Union Station Study included representatives from the City of New Haven, the New Haven Parking Authority, Connecticut Department of Transportation, and Regional Plan Association. The Committee selected W-ZHA (of Annapolis, MD) from eleven firms that responded to the Request for Proposals.

More information about New Haven's Union Station Projected and NY-CT Sustainable Communities can be found at www.sustainableNYCT.org.

Context of New Haven SCI Project



Source: http://www.sustainablenyct.org/library/doc/New_Haven_Union_Station_Presentation.pdf

Route 34 Downtown Crossing
(Tiger II Grant)

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REGIONAL PLANNING PROGRAM

Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan Grant

SCRCOG has been awarded a grant from the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to develop a Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan for ten municipalities in the Region: Bethany, Branford, Hamden, Madison, North Branford, North Haven, Orange, Wallingford, West Haven and Woodbridge. The five additional municipalities in the Region (East Haven, Guilford, Meriden, Milford, and New Haven) have a completed or are currently working on such a plan. The South Central Region Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan (Plan) will allow the participating municipalities to address mitigation of multiple natural hazards. An approved plan for the participating municipalities will allow them to apply for federal funds available for projects which address natural hazards.

SCRCOG staff began the initial process of forming a Regional Hazard Mitigation Committee (Committee), consisting of representatives from the participating municipalities. The Committee will have the potential to expand in the future as additional stakeholders are identified. The Committee's participation and feedback will guide the development of the Plan. The initial meeting of the Committee was held on May 21, 2012 at the SCRCOG offices.

In June 2012, a request for proposals (RFP) seeking the services of a consultant to complete the Plan was issued. The selected consultant will complete a multi-jurisdiction hazard mitigation plan that is approved by both CT DEEP and FEMA and developed in accordance with all regulations and requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000, 44 C.F.R. 201.6) and FEMA's October 1, 2011 Local Mitigation Plan Review Guide. As described in the RFP, the consultant will be responsible for the following tasks:

1. Identification of Potential Hazards
 - ◆ A toolkit for public workshops pertaining to FEMA's Digital FIRM Maps will be developed as part of the hazard identification component and incorporated into the public outreach process of the Plan.
2. Data Collection and Analysis
 - ◆ The risk assessment element will make use of results derived from the Hazus-MH software (FEMA's Methodology for Estimating Potential Losses from Disasters). These results must be generated specifically for the South Central Region.
3. Public Outreach
4. Completion of Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan

The responses to the RFP had to include the following elements: (1) letter of interest, (2) technical response, and (3) price proposal. The RFP was due June 22, 2012. Following review of the responses by SCRCOG staff and the Committee, consultant interviews/presentations were scheduled for July 11, 2012.



What is Mitigation?

"Mitigation is the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. This is achieved through risk analysis, which results in information that provides a foundation for mitigation activities that reduce risk, and flood insurance that protects financial investment."

Source: <http://www.fema.gov/what-mitigation>

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REGIONAL PLANNING PROGRAM

Regional Foreclosure Prevention Program

In September 2011, the mayors and first selectmen of SCRCOG joined forces with The Real Options, Overcoming Foreclosure (ROOF) Project, which has been serving the City of New Haven since 2008. The ROOF Project was formed by non-profit organizations in New Haven and the City government as an effort to alleviate the foreclosure crisis affecting New Haven residents. The impacts of foreclosure have spread to all communities within the South Central Region as residents have become affected by job losses and decreased incomes. Since the beginning of 2008, the South Central Region has seen over 12,000 foreclosure cases, affecting approximately 1 in every 12 homes in the Region.

ROOF offers foreclosure clinics on a monthly basis in different sub-regions within the South Central Region and has expanded outreach to all fifteen municipalities. Outreach activities include sending letters about counseling and mediation resources directly to homeowners who are just entering foreclosure, training for municipal employees on foreclosure resources available to residents, and additional outreach efforts to those who are struggling with their mortgages where assistance may avert foreclosure.

ROOF's partners offer a wide array of services to help both homeowners and tenants. HUD-certified counselors offer information and assistance to homeowners to help them avoid foreclosure. This is a free service, and ROOF is working with SCRCOG leaders to alert the public that they should never have to pay for help and should be wary of foreclosure scams.

Please visit www.theroofproject.org for additional information.



Photo: Regional ROOF Project Launch @ SCRCOG Offices, 9-28-11; Credit: S. Dudley

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REGIONAL PLANNING PROGRAM

Regional Performance Incentive Grant Program

In December 2011, SCROCG submitted two grant proposals under the Regional Performance Incentive (RPI) Grant Program. Below are summaries of the proposals.

Regional GIS Program

The proposed regional GIS (Geographic Information System) program would help integrate the Region's planning activities carried out by SCROCG, such as those related to transportation and land use. In addition, the program would aid in the economic development efforts of REX Development, such as market-based research. Municipal benefits include the ability to view data in a regional context, including infrastructure (i.e. roads, utilities), environmental features, and demographic data. A regional web-based GIS would enable municipalities to collaborate more efficiently on projects of regional significance. For the municipalities in the region with limited or no GIS capabilities, they would have access to a robust regional system, which would significantly reduce start-up and operational costs. In cases where municipalities already have GIS capabilities, they would have access to additional data layers. A regional web-based GIS allows for greater accessibility to data for municipal staff and the general public, improving the Region's public outreach process. Users, regardless of technical expertise, would be able to take advantage of the regional website for online mapping and data analysis to better understand the local and regional landscape.

Shared-Services Study

The proposed shared-services study would identify best opportunities for cost savings through multi-town collaboration in the provision of services and the performance of government operational functions, in particular purchasing. The study would also explore possible cost-saving collaborations between municipalities and Boards of Education, as well as possibilities for inter-municipal equipment sharing. Through cooperation, municipalities can more efficiently use their resources to satisfy the demand for services in difficult economic times. By recognizing regional opportunities for service sharing, municipalities can reduce their costs through economies of scale and scope.



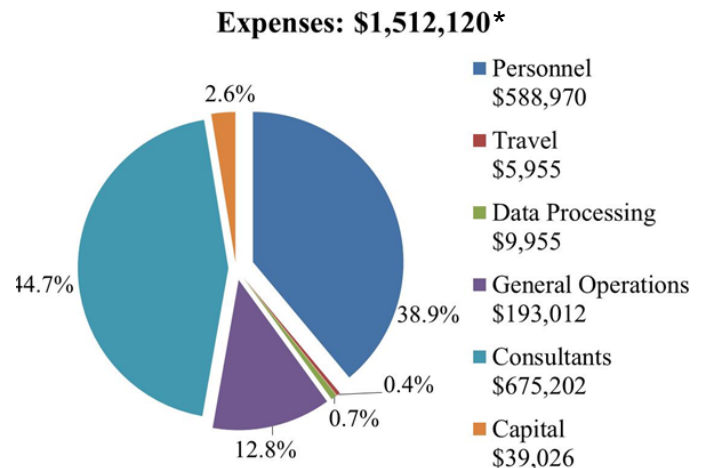
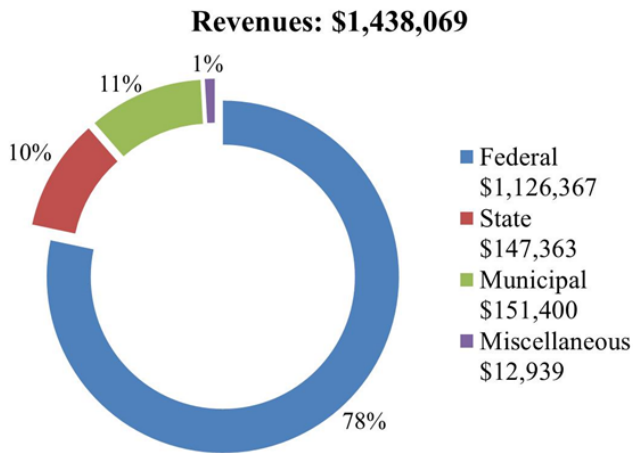
What are the RPI Grant Program Proposal Requirements?

According to the CT Office of Policy and Management, which administers the RPI Grant Program, "the proposal must: (1) describe at least one service currently provided by a municipality(-ies) within the region but not on a regional basis, (2) describe how the service will be delivered regionally and by what entity, and how the population would be served, (3) describe the amount and how the service will achieve "economies of scale" and the amount and manner each municipality will reduce its mill rate, (4) include a "cost benefit analysis" for the provision of such service by the municipality and by the RPO, (5) set out a plan of implementation, (6) estimate savings to be realized by each municipality, (7) include any other information requested by the OPM."

Source: <http://www.ct.gov/opm/cwp/view.asp?a=2985&q=487924>

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ANNUAL BUDGET JULY 1, 2011 to JUNE 30, 2012



* Expenses included a one-time \$50,000 contribution to REX Development, SCRCOG's regional economic development partner. A contribution of \$25,000 to the ROOF Project, a foreclosure prevention program, at the end of FY 2010-2011 ultimately resulted in a \$25,000 negative effect on the FY 2011-2012 budget.

FY12 PRESENTATIONS (TO THE SCRCOG BOARD)

Month	Speaker	Topic
July	Cheryl Duey, <i>CL&P</i>	Utility Right of Way Issues
Aug.	Jason Stanevich, <i>Little Mendelson, LLC</i>	State Paid Sick Leave Act
Sept.	Denise Merrill, <i>Secretary of the State</i>	Election Laws and Issues
Oct.	Tom Maziarz, <i>ConnDOT</i>	New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Rail
	Doug Glowacki, <i>CT DESSP</i>	FEMA Grants
Nov.	Dianne Kaplan deVries, Rebecca Adams, <i>CCJEF</i>	School Finance Reform
Jan.	Ginny Kozlowski, <i>REX Development</i>	REX Development Update
Feb.	Steve Repka, <i>eBenefits Group</i>	SCRCOG Pension Investment Review
March	Kevin Lembo, <i>State Comptroller</i>	CT Partnership Plan - Municipal Healthcare Pooling
	Tom Maziarz, <i>ConnDOT</i>	I-95 NY-New Haven Study - Value Pricing Pilot Program
April	Marna P. Borgstrom, <i>Yale-New Haven Hospital & Christopher O'Connor, St. Raphael Healthcare System</i>	Proposed Merger of Hospitals
	William Villano, <i>Workforce Alliance</i>	Workforce Alliance Overview
May	Gary Stango, <i>C-MED</i>	C-MED Report
June	Carla Weil, Karah Johnson, & Brianna Gavigan, <i>GNHCLF</i>	Regional Foreclosure Prevention Program

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REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ACTIVITIES

SCRCOG's *Long Range Transportation Plan 2011-2040* complements the South Central Region's *Plan of Conservation and Development* and the Connecticut Department of Transportation's (ConnDOT) *Master Transportation Plan*. The *FFY 2012 - FFY 2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)*, shaped in conjunction with ConnDOT, advances the South Central Region's transportation goals and provides a project-by-project guide for use of available U.S. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), state, and municipal support. A biennial Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) guides the planning programming process for the Region. SCRCOG's "*Public Participation Guidelines*" ensure that its plans and programs receive public exposure and provide the public opportunities for input and involvement.

The *Transportation Committee*, composed of chief elected officials, and the *Transportation Technical Committee*, composed of municipal staff, work with transit operators and ConnDOT to shape and review plans and programs. These programs draw on funds from the FTA for replacement of municipal and non-profit organizations' elderly service vehicles, transportation enhancement opportunities, and regional trail projects.

UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM 2012

The following studies were started and completed in FY 2012:

City of New Haven Foxon Boulevard Corridor Study

This study identified and addressed community concerns and current accidents and made recommendations of improvements in accord with City's Complete Streets Policy. The study analyzed existing conditions concerning engineering, safety and traffic, developed enhancement plans and concepts, provided public outreach and prepared recommendations and estimates for capital investments.

Town of East Haven Hemingway Avenue and Coe Avenue Corridor Study

The purpose of this study was to work with the Town of East Haven to identify solutions on an existing flooding issue on Hemingway Avenue and Coe Avenue. In addition, the town was seeking assistance to explore potential realignment options for Proto Drive in order to better accommodate development in the existing industrial park.

Town of Wallingford Traffic Signal Study

The purpose of this study was to gather data relating to the type and condition of the existing traffic signal equipment and geometry. These data were used to develop a qualitative assessment of existing operations, and potential improvement strategies which may require further study.

Congestion Management Process

Data collection and implementation of Congestion Management Process (CMP) recommendations from FY 2010 study. This included obtaining origin and destination data for selected congested routes.

Multi-community Road Study

This study included a review of existing conditions of municipal roads and advised each municipality on ratings to help with the implementation of a pavement management system. Towns covered: Hamden, North Haven, and North Branford.

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OTHER NEWS

Redesigned SCRCOG Website

In January 2012, the redesigned SCRCOG website (www.scrkog.org) was officially launched at the monthly SCRCOG Board Meeting. The site's interface has been considerably improved, making it more inviting and easily accessible. The website offers:

- ◆ Meeting Schedules, Agendas and Minutes
- ◆ Descriptions of the Transportation Planning and Regional Planning Programs
- ◆ Compilation of SCRCOG Studies and Publications, including the Regional Trail Brochures
- ◆ Links to Useful State, Regional, and Non-Profit Websites
- ◆ Interactive Maps

SCRCOG Partnerships

SCRCOG actively participated in the meetings and activities of many statewide and regional organizations. SCRCOG's Executive Director, Carl Amento, and his staff were involved in the NY-CT Sustainable Communities Initiative Steering Committee and the Region 2 Regional Emergency Preparedness Team (REPT) of the Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS). SCRCOG's Executive Director regularly attended meetings of the CT Association of Regional Planning Organizations (CARPO), the Steering Committee of HOME Connecticut, and the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Stakeholders Group. On the regional level, SCRCOG's Executive Director was a member of the Board and Executive Committee of Ride-works, a member of the Board of REX Development, a member of the Regional Alliance, and a member of the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce's Governmental Affairs Committee. In addition, he regularly attended meetings of the Regional Workforce Alliance and CMED of New Haven.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

In early 2012, REX Development, the Region's economic development organization, began the process of updating the South Central Region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS is a plan that addresses the Region's economic challenges and provides strategies to create an economic climate that provides the greatest benefit to residents and businesses. SCRCOG Staff serve on the Strategic Planning Committee, which is made up of public and private sector representatives who guide the development of the CEDS. Additionally, SCRCOG Staff completed a demographic and socioeconomic analysis of the Region, which will be incorporated into the final CEDS document. The analysis, *South Central Region: Demographic and Socioeconomic Trends*, is available at www.scrkog.org.

New Staff Member

Christopher Rappa, of Ansonia, joined the SCRCOG staff in August of 2011 as our Sustainability Planner. Chris is a 2009 graduate of the University of Connecticut (UConn), with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Geography, as well as a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration with a major in Accounting. He obtained a Master of Arts degree in Geography from UConn in 2011. Chris began interning at SCRCOG in June of 2010, and was a huge asset to SCRCOG's program from early on. Chris works on both Transportation and Land Use Planning, including the Sustainable Communities grant program, as well as providing backup assistance to our Business Manager. He is experienced and trained in ESRI's ArcGIS software and Caliper's TransCAD software. Chris led the effort to revamp the SCRCOG website and "re-brand" SCRCOG. In addition, he has attended several training courses on federal public participation and anti-discrimination laws and regulations.