

2013 Annual Report

July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013

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This report highlights the major activities of the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) during the 2012-2013 fiscal year.

SCRCOG provides its fifteen member municipalities a forum to foster communication and collaboration among its member municipalities in identifying and addressing regional issues.

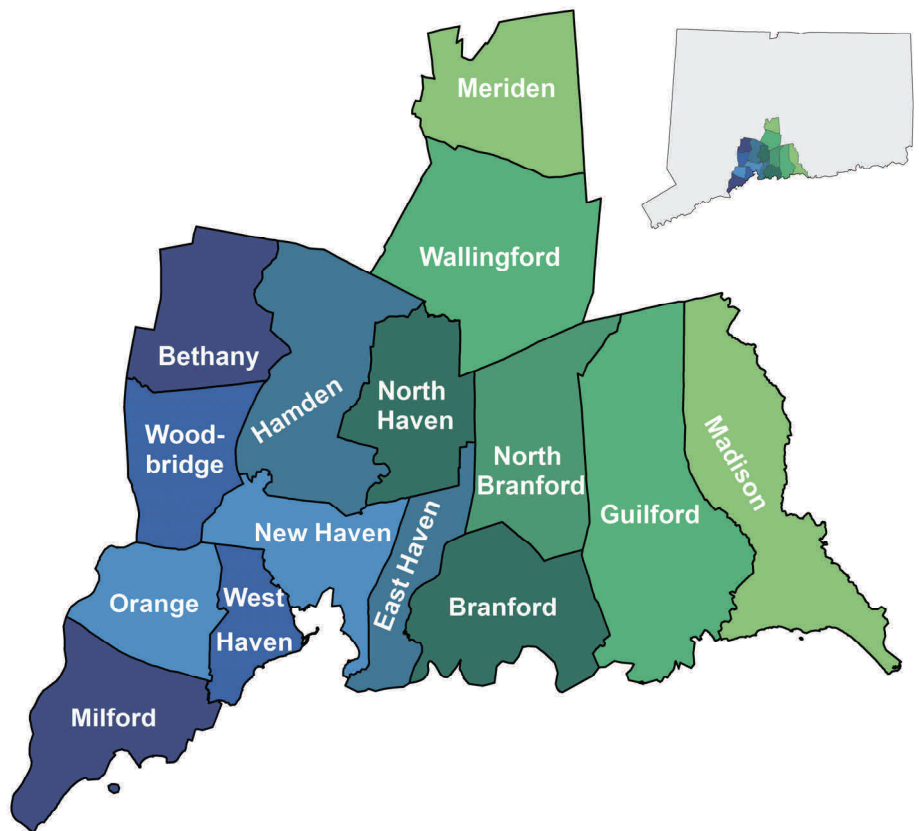
SCRCOG's responsibilities include developing a long range transportation plan, developing a regional transportation work program, maintaining a regional plan of conservation and development, maintaining a regional hazard mitigation plan and reviewing land use changes that affect member municipalities. SCRCOG also provides technical assistance to its member municipalities.

Council Members

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*
	FS Beth Heller (Interim)
	* deceased (April 22, 2013)

SCRCOG Staff

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



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

(as of JANUARY 2013)

Executive Committee

Mayor John Picard - *Chairman*
Mayor Scott Jackson - *Vice Chair*
First Selectman Michael Freda - *Secretary*
First Selectman Fillmore McPherson - *Treasurer*
First Selectman Anthony DaRos
Mayor John DeStefano, Jr.
Mayor Benjamin Blake
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 Rohde

Regional Planning Commission

Bethany	Mary Shurtleff
Branford	Charles Andres
East Haven	Vacant
Guilford	Peter Goletz
Hamden	Richard Szczypek
Madison	Christopher Traugh
Meriden	David White
Milford	Mark Bender
New Haven	Kevin DiAdamo
North Branford	Douglas Combs
North Haven	James Giulietti
Orange	Paul Kaplan
Wallingford	Vacant
West Haven	Christopher Suggs
Woodbridge	Peggy Rubens-Duhl

Transportation Technical Committee

Bethany	Alan Green
Branford	Janice Plaziak
East Haven	Kevin White
Guilford	James Portley
Hamden	Robert Brinton
Madison	Michael Ott
Meriden	Robert Bass
Milford	Gary Wassmer
New Haven	Richard Miller
North Branford	Kurt Weiss
North Haven	Jonathan Bodwell
Orange	Stephen Savarese
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 zoning regulations, zoning maps, developments near municipal boundaries, and updates to municipal plans of conservation and development. From July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013, the RPC reviewed forty-four 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. Annually, SCRCOG compiles social, economic, housing, and demographic data generated by the U.S. Census Bureau's decennial census and *American Community Survey*. Upon request, SCRCOG staff provide assistance to ensure that this region is accurately counted, represented, and given the financial resources applicable to its population.

Sustainable Communities Planning Grant

As part of the *Plan Enhancement and Integration* component of the Sustainable Communities Grant, SCRCOG staff reviewed existing regional plans and municipal plans of conservation and development. The objective 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. Regional Plan Association, in consultation with SCRCOG staff and the other Consortium members, synthesized the plan reviews conducted by the New York and Connecticut partners. The synthesized document was used to identify recommendations that the Execution Plan for Regional Sustainable Development will be focused on. The preliminary recommendations were further developed via several public meetings with stakeholders throughout the NY-CT Planning Region, including state officials. A draft of the Execution Plan is expected to be completed in Spring 2014.

<p>Livability Principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Provide more transportation choices ◆ Promote equitable, affordable housing ◆ Enhance economic competitiveness ◆ Support existing communities ◆ Coordinate policies and leverage investment ◆ Value communities and neighborhoods 	
<p>“Issue Areas”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Water/Solid Waste ◆ Land Use/Open Space ◆ Public Participation ◆ Energy/Climate Change ◆ Demographic Changes 	

Through the Sustainable Communities Grant, the City of New Haven is developing a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) plan for Union Station. The objectives of the plan are:

- Create a governance structure capable of implementing the project.
- Generate economic activity by enhancing the station environment with a mix of land uses.
- Increase rail ridership and reduce vehicle commute trips.
- Address the immediate demand for commuter parking.
- Identify strategies to leverage public financing and station revenues with private investment.

The TOD plan is expected to be finalized by Fall 2013.

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

Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan

SCRCOG continued to work on 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 plan or are currently working on such a plan. The South Central Region Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan will allow the participating municipalities to reduce their vulnerability to natural hazards and reduce the loss of life and property. A Hazard Mitigation Plan is a prerequisite for the Region's municipalities to apply for federal and state grants to implement mitigation projects.

In June 2012, a request for proposals seeking the services of a qualified consultant to complete the Plan was issued. SCRCOG received three proposals and consultant interviews were held on July 11, 2012. Jamie Caplan Consulting, LLC., with AECOM as a subcontractor, was selected to complete the Plan.

SCRCOG staff completed forming the Regional Hazard Mitigation Committee, consisting of representatives from the participating municipalities and other stakeholders in the Region. The Advisory Committee's participation and feedback continues to guide the development of the Plan. Seven of the eight scheduled Advisory Committee meetings have been held. The final meeting has been scheduled for September 11, 2013.



*FEMA Risk Analysis Branch Chief
Mike Goetz presenting to Advisory
Committee on February 13, 2013.*

A key component of the Planning Process was an extensive outreach strategy, which included municipal meetings, a public opinion survey, and four public workshops. In Fall 2012, the consulting team and SCRCOG staff held meetings with municipal staff and other stakeholders in each of the participating municipalities. These meetings provided an opportunity to gather municipal data in order to better represent the unique risks, capabilities, and mitigation actions in each municipality. In September 2012, a public opinion survey was launched via the SCRCOG website. The survey responses helped the Advisory Committee to better understand local concerns and issues as expressed by citizens of the Region. In Spring 2013, four regional public workshops were held in Branford, Madison, North Haven, and West Haven. These workshops provided an opportunity for residents, business owners, and local officials to hear a presentation of the draft Plan and provide input.

The final draft of the Plan was scheduled to be released for public comment in mid-August 2013. The Plan will be submitted to the state and FEMA for review in September.

More information about the Plan, including a project fact sheet and the public workshop presentations, is

Regional Performance Incentive Grant Program

SCRCOG was awarded two grants under the State of Connecticut's Regional Performance Incentive (RPI) Grant Program. Below are summaries of the projects.

Regional GIS Program

SCRCOG was awarded a grant of \$591,028 for the development of a Regional Web-Based Geographic Information System (GIS) Program. The new regional GIS services will enhance the GIS services currently provided by the Region's municipalities. The Regional GIS Program will offer additional functionality and new and improved data layers not necessarily available at the local level. Beyond land use and environmental data, the Regional GIS Program will incorporate economic, transportation, demographic and other data currently not available in a regional context.

SCRCOG has formed a GIS Working Committee to guide the development of the Regional GIS Program. The Committee consists of representatives from the member municipalities and other stakeholders in the region.

In April 2013, SCRCOG issued a request for proposals (RFP) seeking the services of a qualified consultant to develop the Regional GIS Program. Eleven firms responded to the RFP. After two rounds of consultant interviews in June, New England GeoSystems, was selected to undertake the project. The project is expected to take approximately twenty months to complete.



What is GIS?

“A geographic information system (GIS) integrates hardware, software, and data for capturing, managing, analyzing, and displaying all forms of geographically referenced information. GIS allows us to view, understand, question, interpret, and visualize data in many ways that reveal relationships, patterns, and trends in the form of maps, globes, reports, and charts.”

Source: http://www.esri.com/what-is-gis/overview#overview_panel

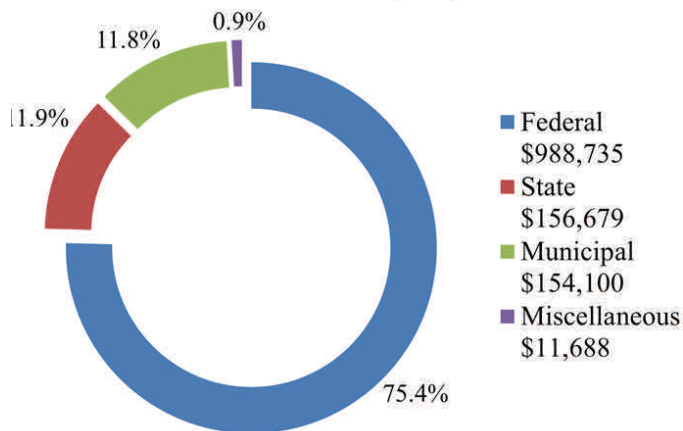
Shared Services Study

SCRCOG was awarded a grant of \$54,581 to conduct an inter-municipal shared services feasibility study. The study will identify and prioritize the best opportunities for multi-town collaboration to achieve cost savings in the provision of services and in the performance of local governmental operations. The study will also consider possible cost-saving collaborations between municipalities and boards of education, as well as possibilities for inter-municipal equipment sharing. Subject areas to be explored include, but are not be limited to: cooperative purchasing; centralizing information technology or administrative support functions; consolidating staff training; sharing police, fire or public works equipment; conducting a regional revaluation program; joint provision of recreational and adult education programs; consolidating solid waste and recycling programs; or creating a multi-town traffic team/ accident investigation unit.

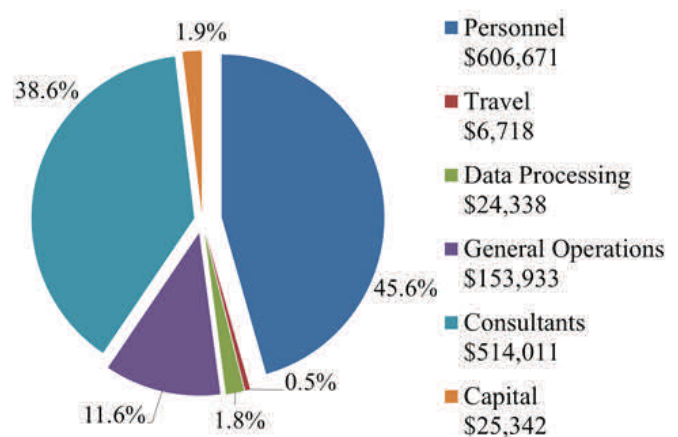
In April 2013, SCRCOG issued a request for proposals for a qualified consultant to conduct the study. Interviews of the four consultants that submitted proposals were held in late May. Edge Technology Services, LLC., of Middletown, was selected to conduct the study. The project is expected to completed in Spring 2014.

ANNUAL BUDGET JULY 1, 2012 to JUNE 30, 2013

Revenues: \$1,311,202



Expenses: \$1,331,013*



* Expenses included a \$10,000 contribution to the Regional ROOF Project, a foreclosure prevention program. The audited allocation of rent of office space to REX Development being \$16,857, which exceeded the \$10,000 actually received from REX, and the Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant not allowing the use of an overhead rate for SCRCOG's staff time ultimately resulted in a \$19,811 negative effect on the FY 2012-2013 budget.

PRESENTATIONS TO THE SCRCOG BOARD

Month	Speaker	Topic
July 2012	Mayor John DeStefano, <i>City of New Haven</i>	Regional Foreclosure Prevention Strategies
	Paul Campion, <i>Adecco Group</i> ; William DeRosa, <i>Diversified Employment</i> ; Anthony Avallone, <i>Reitman Personnel</i>	Temporary Employment
Aug.	Adam Whelchel, <i>The Nature Conservancy</i>	Coastal Resilience and Hazard Mitigation
Sept.	Attorney General George Jepson, <i>State of CT</i>	Attorney General's Office Update
	Mark Rolfe, <i>CDOT</i>	I-95 Record of Decision Transit and Transportation System Management
Oct.	David Fink, <i>Partnership for Strong Communities</i>	Housing Market Update
	Ginny Kozlowski, <i>REX Development</i>	Progress Report on Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
Dec.	Brian Mercure, <i>CDOT</i> ; Melissa Guerrero, <i>Parsons-Brinkerhoff</i>	I-95 New Haven Harbor Corridor Crossing Improvement Program Update
Jan. 2013	Robert MacLagger, <i>Metro North Railroad</i>	Penn Station Access Study
March	Judi Scheiffele, <i>New Haven Port Authority</i>	Port Authority Update
May	Jack Healy and Jennifer Heath, <i>United Way</i>	United Way of Greater New Haven
June	James Rawlings, <i>NAACP of Greater New Haven</i>	Urban Apartheid Report

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 (CDOT) *Master Transportation Plan*. The *FFY 2012 - FFY 2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)*, shaped in conjunction with CDOT, 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 CDOT 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.

Federal Transportation Management Area (TMA) Certification Review

Every four years the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are required to certify that the transportation planning process carried out by SCRCOG meets the requirements of the federal transportation planning regulations. All aspects of SCRCOG's transportation planning process were discussed at the certification review held on February 6, 2013 at the SCRCOG Offices. Specific items of discussion included: Intermodal Transportation, Coordination with Partnering Agencies, Coordination with Transit Agencies, Safety Planning, Freight Planning, Congestion Management, Technical Capabilities, and Public Participation. The final report issued by FHWA and FTA indicates that SCRCOG meets or exceeds the requirements of the federal transportation planning regulations.

UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

The following studies were started and completed in FY 2013:

Town of Wallingford Sign Inventory Pilot Program

This pilot program provided a town-wide inventory of road and street signs, as well as software for management and recommendations for upgrades and regulatory compliance.

Town of East Haven North High Street Bike and Pedestrian Study

This study reviewed existing conditions and provided recommendations for improved pedestrian and bicycle access on North High Street and from nearby residential neighborhoods to both East Haven High School and East Haven Middle School. The study also examined potential connections to the south of I-95.

Town of Hamden Traffic Signal Study

This study reviewed town-owned traffic signals, compliance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and state standards, and provides recommendations for near-term maintenance and a long-term replacement program, including prioritization and scheduling over multi-year budget cycles.

Multi-Community Road Study

This study included a review of existing conditions of municipal roads and advised each community on ratings to help with the implementation of a pavement management system. Towns covered: Madison, Guilford, and East Haven.

UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (continued)

Mobility Management Alternatives Study

This study identifies the steps required to initiate mobility management of human services transportation for the elderly and persons with disabilities. This includes a review of current programs and recommendations for improved and more cost-effective service for users in the Region.

The following studies were started in FY 2013 and will be completed in FY 2014:

City of New Haven Downtown One-Way to Two Way Conversion Study

This study will provide a review of impacts and issues to be addressed on the potential conversion of certain existing downtown streets from one-way to two-way.

Town of Hamden Traffic Calming

This study will evaluate existing conditions and provide recommendations for potential traffic calming measures for the Hamden Plains/Wintergreen and East Side neighborhoods.

Tweed Airport Cargo Study

In cooperation with the Tweed Airport Authority, Town of East Haven and City of New Haven, this study will review existing freight facilities and provide options for increasing freight service for niche markets, removing trucks from the I-95 and I-91 corridors, reducing traffic congestion and providing timely delivery of goods and food products for the Region's consumers.

OTHER NEWS

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). Executive Director Amento 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, Executive Director Amento was 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 continued to serve on the Strategic Planning Committee, which is made up of public and private sector representatives who guide the development of the CEDS. The latest version of the CEDS is unique in that organizations have been enlisted to take a hands-on role with respect to the regional action agenda. SCRCOG will be the "lead implementer" of several goals/objectives that are related to regional cooperation and coordination.