



SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Planning for Our Region's Future

Bethany Branford East Haven Guilford Hamden Madison Meriden Milford
New Haven North Branford North Haven Orange Wallingford West Haven Woodbridge

Carl J. Amento, Executive Director

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MEETING NOTICE & AGENDA
Wednesday, February 24, 2021 – 9:00A.M.

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

NOTICE: As permitted by Governor Lamont's Executive Order 7B, as extended by Executive Order 9A, regarding the COVID-19 Pandemic, this meeting is being held remotely with no in-person attendance

Log-on Information to attend this meeting remotely is provided below:

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81048245756>

Call-In Number: +1-929-205-6099

Meeting ID: 810 4824 5756

The agenda and attachments for this meeting are posted and are available on our website at www.scrcog.org

1. Call to order – First Selectman Michael Freda, *Chair*
2. Adopt Minutes of January 27, 2021 Executive Committee Meeting –
First Selectman Matthew Hoey, Acting Secretary Pages 2,3
3. Resolution Authorizing SCRCOG to Establish and Act as a Regional Purchasing Consortium Pages 4
4. Review of SCRCOG submission to DECD for Submission to EDA for Recovery Funding Pages 5-12
5. Review of CTCOG Submission to OPM re PSAP Consolidation and Assessment Phase-in Pages 13-23
6. Discussion of SCRCOG preparation of Municipal Affordable Housing Plans
7. Notification of SCRCOG Issuance of RFP for Auditor
8. Other Business
9. Adjournment

The agenda and attachments for this meeting are available on our website at www.scrcog.org. Please contact SCRCOG for copy of agenda in a language other than English. Auxiliary aids/services and limited English proficiency translators will be provided with two week's notice.

“Necesidades especiales: a las personas con discapacidad auditiva se les proveerá con medios auditivos y/o intérpretes de signos. Igualmente intérpretes para personas que hablan poco inglés, pero será preciso avisar con dos semanas de antelación. Se puede solicitar la agenda en otro idioma que no sea inglés comunicándose con SCRCOG”.

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

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Carl J. Amento, Executive Director

TO: **SCRCOG Executive Committee Members**
FROM: **First Selectman Matthew Hoey, Secretary**
DATE: **February 17, 2021**
SUBJECT: **SCRCOG Executive Committee Meeting Minutes of January 27, 2021**

Present

Branford First Selectman James Cosgrove
Guilford First Selectman Matthew Hoey, *Secretary*
New Haven Kevin Alvarez, *proxy for Mayor Justin Elicker*
North Haven First Selectman Michael Freda, *Vice Chair*
Wallingford Mayor William Dickinson
Woodbridge First Selectman Beth Heller, *Chair*

SCRCOG Staff Carl Amento, Executive Director; Stephen Dudley, Deputy Director; Christopher Rappa, Finance Director; Andy Cirioli, Municipal Services Manager/Regional Planner

NOTE: The December SCRCOG Executive Committee meeting was a virtual meeting facilitated by Zoom because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. Call to order

Chair Heller called the meeting to order at 9:05 am.

2. Adopt Minutes of January 27, 2021 SCRCOG Executive Committee Meeting

First Selectman Hoey presented the Minutes of the SCRCOG Executive Committee of December 10, 2020, which were included in the agenda packet at Pages 2 and 3. He moved for their approval. First Selectman Heller seconded the motion, which passed with all in favor.

3. Proposed Revision to the RSG Spending Plan, FY 2020-2021

On pages 4-9 of the agenda packet, the proposed revision to the FY 2020-2021 RSG Spending Plan involves transfer of \$7500 within the Spending Plan from the Salary line item to the Consultant line item. First Selectman Cosgrove moved to accept the audit report. The \$7500 in transferred funds will be used to pay SCRCOG's regional dues to the Capitol Region Purchasing Council (CRPC) for FY 2020-2021. Executive Director Amento explained that the failure to budget for and pay for the regional dues was an oversight. Several SCRCOG towns are actively utilizing the CRPC services. First Selectman Cosgrove moved to approve the Revision to the RSG Spending Plan. Hoey seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.

4. FY 2021 Budget Revision #2

The proposed Budget Revision #2 is contained on pages 10-12 of the agenda packet. The proposed Budget Revision deals with the same \$7500 issue of payment by SCRCOG of \$7500 for CRPC regional dues for FY 2020-2021. The Budget Revision also involves payment by SCRCOG of the FY 2017-2018 Regional CRPC dues. Again, this was a year in which several SCRCOG towns made

substantial utilization of CRPC services. The issue of SCRCOG not paying for dues that year was also an oversight. The issue of non-payment was not raised until the fall of 2020. First Selectman Cosgrove moved to accept the audit report. First Selectman Hoey seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously

5. Discussion of SCRCOG Shared Municipal Services Programming for second half FY 2020-2021

Executive Director Amento discussed several municipal services which are being proposed for offering to the SCRCOG towns during the second half of FY 2020-2021. Amento reviewed the SCRCOG Regional Cybersecurity Initiative and reviewed the proposed allocation of employee training licenses based on resident population. After discussion, the Executive Committee members advised that allocation on a population basis could serve as an appropriate beginning point with adjustments made for those towns needing fewer or lesser licenses than originally allocated.

Amento previewed the SCRCOG Regional Purchasing Initiative which has begun with monthly procurement training sessions and cfree counseling sessions to assist those towns under-resourced in the area of purchasing. Amento discussed plans for a SCRCOG Purchasing Consortium which would allow purchasing of the same item or service by multiple SCRCOG towns. Much interest has been shown in on-call services for the towns. The consensus of the Executive Committee was that the SCRCOG staff should proceed with this initiative.

Amento also reported that members of the Regional Affordable Housing Working Group had requested that SCRCOG consider producing municipal affordable housing plans for all SCRCOG towns. The plans are now required by statute. The model for such a regional compendium of municipal plans utilizing one consultant is the Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan which has been produced twice by SCRCOG with individual municipal chapters and a regional overview. The Executive Committee viewed SCRCOG" willingness to undertake such a project favorably, and requested further reports on the likely costs and logistics at a future meeting.

6. Other Business

None

7. Adjournment

First Selectman Heller moved to adjourn; First Selectman Hoey seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 am.

Respectfully submitted,

First Selectman Matthew Hoey, *Secretary*



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Carl J. Amento, Executive Director

**Resolution Authorizing SCRCOG to
Establish and Act as a Regional Purchasing Consortium**

Whereas: The Regional Purchasing, Finance, and Public Works Working Groups have discussed the need for a regional purchasing consortium to facilitate bids, request for proposals and qualification, and other procurement duties on behalf of some or all of the region's municipalities;

Whereas: SCRCOG municipalities do not have access to a flexible and responsive purchasing consortium that would satisfy their immediate procurement needs;

Whereas: SCRCOG has the professional working relationship with the region's municipalities' finance and purchasing staff to coordinate and facilitate a regional purchasing consortium in which its member municipalities may voluntarily participate; and

Whereas: the necessary procedural documents will be prepared by SCRCOG and distributed to the member municipalities to guide their regional purchasing consortium efforts.

Therefore, be it Resolved:

That the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) is hereby authorized to establish and act as a regional purchasing consortium for the purpose of requesting bids, issuing request for proposals and qualifications, and performing other procurement functions as required by the region's municipalities.

Certificate:

The undersigned duly qualified and acting Secretary of the South Central Regional Council of Governments certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted at a legally convened meeting of the SCRCOG on: February 24, 2021.

Date: February 24, 2021

By: _____
First Selectman James Zeoli, *Secretary*
South Central Regional Council of Governments

From: Daum, Alexandra [<mailto:Alexandra.Daum@ct.gov>]

Sent: Thursday, January 28, 2021 4:37 PM

To: Lyle Wray <lwrap@crcog.org>; Matt Fulda <mfulda@ctmetro.org>; Samuel Gold <SGold@rivercog.org>; Mickey Morabito <john.filchak@necog.org>; Carl Amento <camento@scrcog.org>; Francis R. Pickering <fpickering@westcog.org>

Cc: Lehman, David <David.Lehman@ct.gov>; Glassman, Mary <Mary.Glassman@ct.gov>; Bergeron, Brenda <Brenda.Bergeron@ct.gov>; Stewart, Rita <Rita.Stewart@ct.gov>; Rasid, Paige <Paige.Rasid@ct.gov>; Tim Malone <tmalone@crcog.org>

Subject: EDA Grant Next Steps

All –

Following up on our December meeting regarding the EDA grant, I wanted to outline the next steps in the process.

DECD and DEHMS have worked with our EDA rep to create a list of pre-vetted scopes that are “very likely to be approved” as part of our upcoming EDA application.

The attached is a worksheet with a “menu” of these scopes. I say “menu” because we understand not every region has exactly the same needs. The goal of the worksheet is for regions to pick from the menu to build a scope that works best for them. In addition to selecting scopes, each region needs to build a budget that is specific to their selected scopes and cost structures. We have provided suggested budget ranges for each scope, but these are merely recommendations. Feel free to go outside the ranges if supported by detail in your worksheet. Also note that you do not need to pick an option for each task and can pick multiple options for one task.

We ask that all regions **return the worksheet by 2/9**. This is crucial to meeting our submission timeline. The EDA money is not “reserved” for CT in any way. The longer we wait to submit, the greater the risk is that the funds will be gone.

We will likely set up a zoom session next week for any questions that come up after reviewing the worksheet. Look out for that invite!

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

Alexandra

Alexandra Daum

Deputy Commissioner

Department of Economic & Community Development, State of Connecticut

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Hartford, CT 06103

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alexandra.daum@ct.gov

<https://portal.ct.gov/DECD>



Overview & Instructions:

Overview:

The State of Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) will be submitting an application to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) under Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 PWEAA/ Cares Act Funding

The application will consist of workplans and budgets for **6 Council of Governments** (COG) (those that were not awarded the non-competitive CARES Act Funding)

EDA has identified **4 eligible tasks** under this program

Working with EDA, we have **identified 2-3 allowable projects under each of these EDA Tasks.**

Providing COGS with pre-reviewed project options, will allow us to develop and submit the application as soon as possible.

These EDA funds are competitive and there are no state-set asides or earmarked funds.

Instructions: Tabs include Map, EDA Tasks 1-4, Summary & Totals

Map

This tab includes a map and listing of COGs

EDA Tasks

Tabs for each of the **4 EDA Tasks** are provided in this workbook

Each Tab includes optional projects that have been reviewed with EDA.

*** COGS can select projects from one or more of the 4 EDA Tasks**

*For Each Project Selected, complete items a - d

- fill out the project selected (drop-down list)
- provide details/narrative on the approach to completing this project (includes tasks and who will carry them out)
provide proposed scope of work under the project
- provide a narrative on anticipated outcomes/results of completing this project
provide measurable deliverables (COGS will need to report status on these during the performance period)
- project budget - provide or estimate amounts for consultants, staff, other budget categories to complete the project.

Summary

This tab provides a summary of projects selected under each EDA task and a running total based on project budgets.

Submission Instructions:

Name of COG:

South Central Regional Council of Govern

POC for the COG:

Carl Amento

email: camento@scrcog.org

EDA TASK 1:

The development of an economic recovery and resilience plan, tied to the applicant's approved Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, to address the economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic.

Option 1

Project Description: With qualified personnel (*hire a consultant, and/or use existing COG staff*) survey businesses, gather information, with an emphasis on social equity and underserved communities, and **develop a pandemic focused economic recovery and resilience plan that will be integrated into an existing CEDS.**

Project Funding: \$70,000 to \$90,000 *recommended range*

Project Details - complete items a - d for the selected Project

a) **Option Selected:** Select (dropdown) Project Option (1 or 2)

b) Provide Details/Narrative on the approach to this project (staffing, tasks, etc.)

The Covid-19 crisis has exposed weaknesses in the South Central Connecticut region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and to the region's economy as a whole. As a region we need to develop a pathway forward on how we diversify our economy for economic sustainability that can withstand the economic shocks.

To respond to the extraordinary and compelling urgency of the Covid-19 pandemic will require extensive regional cooperation and coordination to development both short-term and long-term economic recovery and resiliency plans to be included in the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. Specifically, the unmet needs of underserved communities were highlighted during the pandemic. Businesses have suffered from insufficient bandwidth and technology, limited access to capital and underdeveloped financial management skills. Applying for federal and state programs was much more difficult for smaller businesses in distressed areas without established banking relationships and financial documentation. In addition, the lack of established communication channels between economic and public health resources and small businesses was problematic. Additional outreach is needed to identify additional issues and to develop a more supportive and cohesive network throughout the region.

SCRCOG will administer the proposed project and coordinate the completion of the tasks with REX Development.

- Survey businesses and local governments to gather real time data. Evaluate data on the impact of COVID-19 on businesses and local governments in the South Central Connecticut region on both short-term and long-term basis.
- Coordinate community outreach and public engagement as needed
- Determine the essential technical assistance methods needed by local governments, business owners and other stakeholder organizations to ensure recovery
- Develop a pandemic focused economic recovery and resilience plan that will be integrated into an existing CEDS.

Task 1 continued

c) Provide anticipated outcomes/results of completing this project and how the project will be sustained at the end of the grant

The anticipated outcome of the proposed work program is to develop metrics for economic recovery and resilience planning for business owners that will be incorporated into the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. REX will leverage existing and seek new funding sources to continue the advancement of projects, programs and planning efforts initiated during the grant period.

d) Project Budget:

Category	Estimated cost	Budget Narrative
Personnel (List below)		
C. Amento	3,589.63	see above for description
E. Livshits	1,944.39	see above for description
A. Cirioli	1,535.30	see above for description
Personnel/Fringe	3,026.50	fringe benefits for staff members listed above
Equipment		
Supplies		
Contractual	70,000.00	see above for description
Indirect Charges*	8,009.58	10% De Minimis Rate
	\$88,105.40	

** Please note only federally approved indirect rates (not state approved) can be applied under EDA guidance. If the COG does not have a federally approved rate, a 10% de minimis can be applied.*

If proposing to fund staff time use the chart below to provide additional detail personnel detail

Staff person (name)	Annual Salary	x % time on the Grant	Total
C. Amento	\$131,165.00	2.74%	\$3,589.63
E. Livshits	\$71,048.00	2.74%	\$1,944.39
A. Cirioli	\$56,100.00	2.74%	\$1,535.30
			\$0.00
			\$0.00

EDA TASK 2:**The deployment of disaster recovery coordinators to orchestrate your region's response to the pandemic.****Option 1**

Project Description: Provide **Disaster Recovery** support, through use of COG staff and/or consultants, to the region's Recovery Steering Committee and subcommittees, which are made up of representatives from diverse communities and interests. Disaster Recovery support may include: lead and coordinate the Recovery Steering Committee meetings, assist in the identification of unmet needs, assist with matching resources to needs, serve as a liaison between state, regional and local recovery efforts, and escalate unmet needs in the region to the DEMHS Regional Coordinator.

Project Funding: **\$90,000** to **\$100,000** *recommended range*

Project Details - complete a - d for the selected Project

a) Option Selected: Select (dropdown) Project Option (1 or 2)

b) Provide Details/Narrative on the approach to this project (staffing, tasks, etc.)

SCRCOG will bring to this project a regional perspective as the planning agency and the principal organizing entity for the 15 municipalities in our Council of Governments. We will coordinate our efforts with RiverCOG, our partners in leading the DEMHS Region 2 Long-Term Recovery Planning work. This coordination will include SCRCOG and RiverCOG engaging a common consultant with disaster recovery expertise.

SCRCOG staff members involved in this project will include:

- Carl Amento, Executive Director, who is co-chair of the DEMHS Region 2 Recovery Steering Committee, along with RiverCOG Executive Director, Sam Gold, and Reverend Steven Cousin, who is a volunteer. Carl has been SCRCOG's Executive Director for the past 11 years, and served previously as Mayor of the Town of Hamden for three 2-year terms, Deputy Corporation Counsel for the City of New Haven where he focused on economic development projects), as a private attorney for 22 years, and has served on and headed numerous community service organizations over the past 40 years.
- Eugene Livshits, Senior Regional Planner, holds a masters degree in Urban Planning and has been working at SCRCOG for 12 years. During Eugene's tenure at SCRCOG, he has had exposure to a broad range of planning projects and extensive experience as a project manager for numerous major planning studies. Eugene is well-versed in GIS mapping and data collection and analysis, and community outreach.
- Adriano (Andy) Cirioli, Municipal Services Manager/ Regional Planner, holds a masters degree in Public Administration and has worked at SCRCOG for the past 2-1/2 years as an intern and now full-time staff member. Andy works closely with the SCRCOG municipalities including their staff members leading regional projects which benefit those municipalities.

Carl will oversee SCRCOG's work on Disaster Recovery, Eugene will bring his expertise in planning, GIS and data to the Recovery effort and Andy will utilize his knowledge of local government to work with the member municipalities and to assist in organizing regional programs and initiatives.

The consultant with extensive experience and expertise in Disaster Recovery will be selected through an RFP process, which will be coordinated with RiverCOG. This will allow for a common consultant to be available to assist both COGs, DEMHS Region 2, and the Regional Recovery Steering Committee on organization, outreach and projects.

The tasks which will be undertaken by SCRCOG staff, in coordination with RiverCOG and our common consultant, will include:

1. Leading regional coronavirus recovery planning efforts that advance equity and resilience among our most highly-impacted communities;
2. Leading and coordinating the work and meetings of the DEMHS Region 2 Recovery Steering Committee along with our partner, RiverCOG;
3. Serving as a liaison between local, state, and federal partners in order to speed the recovery process through strategic technical assistance and local capacity augmentation for the highly-impacted communities within our jurisdiction;
4. Facilitating the implementation of locally-generated disaster recovery projects that further economic and social resilience;
5. Developing baseline data for assessing the current condition of community resilience, such as by inventorying regional resources;
6. Conducting unmet needs assessment and resource matching to community needs in order to enhance community resilience especially for the most vulnerable populations who have been most adversely affected by the COVID-19 emergency;
7. Performing extensive outreach to survey residents, businesses, local governments, anchor institutions, and non-profit organizations to determine economic impacts and immediate, mid-term and long-term needs, concerns, and development goals that ensure questions pertinent to local, cultural and diverse communities are included.
8. Identifying funding sources and service providers to support Long Term Recovery and continue to seek new funding sources that can be harnessed to advance community economic and social recovery goals;
9. Providing GIS services, data analysis and mapping, as needed.
10. Reporting on unmet needs, matching resources to needs, and outreach to residents, local governments, institutions and businesses to statewide recovery leadership, municipal leaders, and full REPTs/COG members on a regular basis.

Task 2 continued

c) Provide anticipated outcomes/results of completing this project and how the project will be sustained at the end of the grant

The anticipated outcomes and results of undertaking these tasks will be a more connected, resilient region and state which has made a successfully planned, coordinated and equitable recovery from the pandemic.

The measurable deliverables will include a robust stakeholder engagement process, including a data driven approach to identifying unmet needs, and available resources. This approach will allow SCRCOG to establish metrics, and document the progress of the tasks undertaken and services provided, especially to traditionally underserved populations to advance the region's recovery.

SCRCOG will leverage existing and seek new funding sources to continue the advancement of projects, programs and planning efforts initiated during the grant period. A recovery and equity perspective will become a long-term part of SCRCOG's regular planning program.

d) Project Budget:

Category	Estimated cost	Budget Narrative
Personnel **		
C. Amento	\$14,358.51	see above for description
E. Livshits	\$9,721.95	see above for description
A. Cirioli	\$7,676.52	see above for description
Personnel/Fringe	13,415.50	fringe benefits for staff members listed above
Equipment		
Supplies		
Contractual	45,000.00	see above for description
Indirect Charges*	9,017.25	10% De Minimis Rate
	\$99,189.73	

* Please note only federally approved indirect rates (not state approved) can be applied under EDA guidance.

If the COG does not have a federally approved rate, a 10% de minimis can be applied.

If proposing to fund staff time use the chart below to provide additional detail personnel detail

Staff person (name)	Annual Salary	x % time on the Grant	Total
C. Amento	\$131,165.00	10.95%	\$14,358.51
E. Livshits	\$71,048.00	13.68%	\$9,721.95
A. Cirioli	\$56,100.00	13.68%	\$7,676.52
			\$0.00

EDA TASK 3

The provision of technical assistance, as necessary to local governments, businesses and other stakeholder organizations.

Option 2

Project Description: Host a series of **virtual entrepreneurial meet-ups, educational webinars and/or other virtual networking functions** that bring together new, existing, minority, women-owned and businesses located in a designated opportunity zones. Host discussions on responding to the current economic environment and identifying opportunities . Provide speakers/presenters to provide educational webinars series on e-commerce, loan assistance programs, etc. Offer guidance on building capacity, marketing ideas and the sharing of best practices.

Project Funding: **\$40,000** to **\$75,000** *recommended range*

Project Details - complete items a - d for the selected Project

a) Option Selected: Select (dropdown) Project Option (1, 2 or 3)

b) Provide Details/Narrative on the approach to this project (staffing, tasks, etc.)

It will be critical to bring back the vibrancy of South Central Connecticut when the Covid-19 crisis recedes. Many people have retreated to home offices and our downtowns and business districts are devastated.

SCRCOG will administer the proposed project and coordinate the completion of the tasks with REX Development.

- Programming will have a focus on entrepreneurship.
- Create a series of virtual entrepreneurial meetups, educational webinars and other networking functions to connect people to the region.
- The focus will be on bringing together new, existing, minority, women-owned and businesses located in the region’s designated opportunity zones. Events will occur throughout the region to reach the largest audience.
- Programs will be dedicated on capacity building and technical assistance. Overall, people will be encouraged to take a job or start a business in the South Central Connecticut region in order to build it back stronger.

c) Provide anticipated outcomes/results of completing this project and how the project will be sustained at the end of the grant

The anticipated outcomes/results of completing this project will include the items outlined below.

- Number of business start-ups
- Decrease of overall unemployment in the region
- Participation in assistance programs
- Participation in webinars and other technical assistance

REX will leverage existing and seek new funding sources to continue the advancement of the projects, programs and planning efforts initiated during the grant period.

Task 3 continued

d) Project Budget:

Category	Estimated cost	Budget Narrative
Personnel (List below)		
C. Amento	\$3,589.63	see above for description
E. Livshits	\$1,944.39	see above for description
A. Cirioli	\$1,535.30	see above for description
Personnel/Fringe	\$3,026.50	fringe benefits for staff members listed above
Equipment		
Supplies		
Contractual	\$55,000.00	see above for description
Indirect Charges*	\$6,509.58	10% De Minimis Rate
	\$71,605.40	

* Please note only federally approved indirect rates (not state approved) can be applied under EDA guidance. If the COG does not have a federally approved rate, a 10% de minimis can be applied.

If proposing to fund staff time use the chart below to provide additional detail personnel detail

Staff person (name)	Annual Salary	x % time on the Grant	Total
C. Amento	\$131,165.00	2.74%	\$3,589.63
E. Livshits	\$71,048.00	2.74%	\$1,944.39
A. Cirioli	\$56,100.00	2.74%	\$1,535.30
			\$0.00
			\$0.00

EDA TASK 4:**The funding of appropriate technology and staff support for these pandemic response activities****Option 1**

Project Description: Establish and maintain an on-line presence/website, for a two year period, to assist in the economic recovery of an **identified sector(s)** in the region. Conduct outreach to businesses in the sector(s) providing assistance in setting up an on-line presence/virtual platform. The on-line presence, e-commerce and/or app would provide for on-line orders, acceptance of credit and EBT payments, scheduling and/or pickup options. (e.g., agricultural sector: assist farmers, farmers markets by providing a website to: advertise their items, offer on-line orders, on-line payment options, pick up times, etc.

Project Fund Range: \$90,000 to \$100,000

Project Details - complete a - d for the selected Project

a) **Option Selected:** Select (dropdown) Project Option (1 or 2)

b) Provide Details/Narrative on the approach to this project (staffing, tasks, etc.)

The COVID-19 crisis has impacted the tourism economy hard, with unmatched effects on jobs and businesses. According to the Connecticut Department of Labor statistics the Accommodations, Food Services, Arts, Entertainment & Recreation sectors were hard hit early in the pandemic and will be slow to recover. For the week ending 03/15/2020, the total new unemployment claims for the South Central Connecticut region were 79,005 with 27,297 of those initial claims in the hospitality/tourism sector. Despite partial recovery in other sectors, the hospitality sector still represents just under 20% of the state's unemployment rate. New Haven, Meriden, East Haven and West Haven are the region's four most distressed municipalities and combined these towns represent over 54% of the region's ongoing unemployment claims. Many of those claimants work in the tourism/hospitality sector.

SCRCOG will administer the proposed project and coordinate the completion of the tasks with REX Development.

- Survey of tourism businesses within the 15 towns on their on-line presence and capabilities and the direct impact COVID-19 has had on their businesses
- Using the survey results, implement a program in supporting tourism business to adapt and survive by integrating technology to sell and use E-commerce
- Conduct direct outreach support to tourism sector businesses
- Coordinate broader collaboration among the sector to create new tourism promotions and marketing opportunities
- Assist in identifying new markets/audiences
- Conduct tourism focused marketing webinars using online platforms and social media
- Initially focus on rebuilding domestic travel market

*Task 4 Continued***c) Provide anticipated outcomes/results of completing this project and how the project will be sustained at the end of the grant**

The anticipated outcomes/results of completing this project will include the items outlined below.

- Increase hotel occupancy
- Decrease unemployment in the sector
- Reopen venues that are closed due to COVID-19
- Increase the number of visitor events
- Increase in the number of businesses that can reach audiences/guests through the internet

REX will leverage existing and seek new funding sources to continue the advancement of projects, programs and planning efforts initiated during the grant period.

d) Project Budget:

Category	Estimated cost	Budget Narrative
Personnel (List below)		
C. Amento	\$3,589.63	see above for description
E. Livshits	\$1,944.39	see above for description
A. Cirioli	\$1,535.30	see above for description
Personnel/Fringe	\$3,026.50	fringe benefits for staff members listed above
Equipment		
Supplies		
Contractual	\$80,000.00	see above for description
Indirect Charges*	\$9,009.58	10% De Minimis Rate
	\$99,105.40	

* Please note only federally approved indirect rates (not state approved) can be applied under EDA guidance. If the COG does not have a federally approved rate, a 10% de minimis can be applied.

Task 4 continued

Staff person (name)	Annual Salary	x % time on the Grant	Total
C. Amento	\$131,165.00	2.74%	\$3,589.63
E. Livshits	\$71,048.00	2.74%	\$1,944.39
A. Cirioli	\$56,100.00	2.74%	\$1,535.30
			\$0.00
			\$0.00

CT Council of Governments Report: Public Safety Answering Points & Municipal Assessment

The Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management Secretary has requested that the state's Councils of Governments (COGs) submit reports showing plans for consolidation of Public Service Answering Points (PSAPs) and establishing a phase-in approach to municipal assessment, as well as implementing the COGs top three (3) priorities. Because both PSAPs and assessment are state-wide issues with many common themes for the COGs, the Connecticut Association of Councils of Governments (CTCOG) is submitting a unified report for those common themes and plans. Individual COGs may or may not expound on additional points or information or progress that may be unique to their regions in their individualized reports to the Secretary. Moreover, each COG will report individually on progress regarding its three highest priorities listed in its December 2019 report to the Secretary.

In addition, since the inception of the pandemic in the spring of 2020, COG's have been requested by the State to perform multiple functions regarding COVID recovery, including forming and staffing Regional Long Term Recovery Steering Committees and attending numerous meetings regarding COVID response and recovery. For this Fiscal Year, this effort is being funded by Regional Service Grant (RSG) funds. CTCOG is including in this report a section regarding work that all COGs have been performing for the COVID recovery efforts, because COVID recovery has become a priority for all COGs at this time.

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1. Public Safety Answering Points

CTCOG has long recognized the benefits and the potential of PSAP consolidation. The 2012 Kimball report commissioned by the State and referenced in many previous reports is still applicable today. The report concluded that 3 Regional PSAP centers statewide would be ideal for the State of Connecticut. Understanding that consolidation to 3 PSAPS is likely not achievable, there are still potential gains and efficiencies that could be achieved through smaller-scale consolidation.

The largest difference between 2012 and today, almost 10 years later is technological advance both in physical infrastructure (hardware) and software. On the hardware side, a robust fiber connection has been established between police and fire stations. The Public Safety Data Network (PSDN) is a high speed fiber optic network that serves as a dedicated data transport infrastructure and interconnectivity pathway for public safety and government applications and services throughout the state. The network consists of approximately 8,800 miles of fiber connecting 515 nodes or Points of Interest (POIs) and is designed with the highest level of redundancy. This network connects the 110 PSAPs in Connecticut that provide the 911 Emergency Answering service to the citizens of the state. On the software side, potentially viable alternatives to on-premises installations have become available and experienced substantial market uptake. The PSDN could provide the infrastructure and opportunities for leveraging cloud computing and other new technologies in public safety and PSAPs.

1.1. Opportunities for the Way Forward

CTCOG sees several potential paths as opportunity areas to consolidated PSAPs that meet economies of scale and would work with the COG structure:

- Establish virtual regional PSAPs.
- Stand-up a regional system and offer a voluntary buy-in solution for municipalities.

➤ *Critical Elements from the State*

In order to move forward with discussions on consolidation there are actions from the State that would pave the way to enable COGs to assist or achieve PSAP consolidation.

Clear goals and definition of acceptable consolidation. Statewide, there are 110 PSAPs. Numerous reports and studies have made it clear that that is too many. CTCOG agrees, although not every stakeholder may concur with this assessment. CTCOG proposes the State define two straightforward and simple metrics as targets, or at a minimum, soft goals. These goals would give COGs the ability to encourage members and showcase the benefits of consolidated emergency response.

- Call volume (daily, weekly, or annual)
- Ability to respond to larger emergencies (this could be measured by FTEs or the ability to take X number of calls within a short time period)

- Set goals based on national standards or averages (such as the number transfers, response times or others). The state could set goals that require PSAPs to meet or exceed Next Generation 911 standards (such as APCO, NENA, etc.) and to encourage voluntary consolidation.

Effective subsidizing. Currently, most PSAPs have very little or no financial incentive for consolidation. Currently, there may be a disconnect between PSAP leadership and municipal leadership. This, we believe, should be corrected. One solution is that the statute be modified to require both municipal CEO representation and a comprehensive annual report to each community served. Within such report should be a consideration of consolidation or sharing of services to reduce costs and improve efficiencies. The current subsidy does not encourage or incentivize consolidation. Gradually changing the formula over multiple years to reward consolidation would give additional incentives to the municipalities.

The state could and should define what constitutes "regional" or a minimum "critical mass" to qualify as a PSAP eligible for subsidy. [House Bill 6052](#) and [HB 6302](#) have likely been introduced as potential vehicles to structure a PSAP consolidation process. The current language of 6302 does set a threshold of PSAPs serving populations of 40,000 - similar to previous legislative proposals. The previous legislative proposals did not provide enough incentive for municipalities with standalone PSAPs. An effective incentive rewarding consolidation would be significantly more impactful than these proposals.

Encourage municipalities to understand the benefits. The primary benefits of consolidation are in quality of service and better response times, which is often critical in situations of life-or-death. A primary reason for PSAP consolidation is the opportunity for better response times in a disaster or major emergency. Simply put, it is the ability to answer and respond to emergency calls that matters most. Call transfers risk losing calls and delays that may cost lives. Many of the smaller PSAPs were overwhelmed during some of the recent weather events (the microburst that affected many Connecticut towns readily comes to mind) and a consolidated PSAP would have been better able to handle those emergencies. This benefit needs to be stressed with the municipalities through existing communication channels.

Significant state capital investment. Building consolidated regional centers, or moving to consolidated regional centers, will require significant capital investment. When towns need to upgrade outdated equipment or upgrade their CAD/RMS system, the state could encourage consolidation by offering significant state investment if the municipality is moving to a consolidated model.

Encourage a long-range view of consolidation. With clear goals laid out, the State can encourage municipalities over the long-term to consolidate and reap the benefits of consolidation. Savings and efficiencies will be gained, but those savings will be over the long-haul. Large PSAP consolidation will take five years if done aggressively. The monetary savings from those five years will be reaped years after that consolidation takes place.

CAD/Mobile Systems. There should not be an assumption that PSAPs can easily consolidate using the existing CAD/Mobile systems. A consolidation process should include an assessment of the current CAD/Mobile system and evaluate other systems that may improve public safety operations. In addition, most of the departments use an integrated CAD/RMS (Records Management System) and police and Fire RMS should be a component of a PSAP consolidation project.

GIS/Mapping. – Modern CAD/Mobile systems are mapping centric. The public safety grade GIS data should meet NG911 GIS standards.

1.2. Virtual Regional PSAPs

The State has made significant investment in its robust fiber optic network and Connecticut Statewide Police Emergency Radio Network. Currently almost every firehouse or police station is connected to these networks. There is potential to leverage the networks and create Virtual Regional PSAPs.

Many commercial call centers today actually are answered from the customer service representatives' individual homes, saving costs, as well as providing flexibility and resiliency. From the outside, a Virtual Regional PSAPs would appear as a single PSAP but from the back-end perspective, the locations of the actual "Regional PSAP" would be dispersed across the participating municipalities. This virtual PSAP would address concerns related to dark stations, understaffing and excessive call volume.

CTCOG is interested in exploring the possibility of virtual regional PSAPs including the necessary infrastructure, required equipment and other technical aspects of virtual consolidation. From a high level, it appears that the current infrastructure could be used, but a deeper review would be necessary to verify what is required and identify deficiencies in the current infrastructure. Although individual COGs may vary, CTCOG sees this as a potential option worth pursuing and plan to explore the "how-to" and options in further detail during the next fiscal year.

1.3. Voluntary Buy-in Solution

The second way forward for large PSAP consolidation is standing up a regional PSAP with two or more key municipalities and creating a structure for other municipalities to "buy-in" as their equipment or software needs require updating and replacement.

This is a more traditional model of larger scale PSAP consolidation. Depending on the region, it is possible an existing PSAP could be used as the base for the consolidation and "adding" additional municipalities and functions.

Some areas in Connecticut already have this structure in place and can add additional members (within a certain size) with the right incentives. Other areas in Connecticut would require willing partners and significant capital investment to set-up a consolidated buy-in solution.

1.4. Challenges

As with all plans, programs and opportunities, consolidated PSAPs are not without specific challenges. CTCOG will address a few major themes in the challenges that CTCOG, in general, has faced when discussing PSAP consolidation with its members. The challenges can be divided into two major categories: technical and people. CTCOG believes the technical challenges can be overcome with the right planning and careful implementation. The people challenges are the ones in which CTCOG believes state incentives and encouragement will be key.

➤ *Technical Challenges*

The technical challenges to consolidation are: cost, systems integration, and effective service provision.

Cost. With the Virtual Regional PSAPs, it is likely the initial capital costs would be less than a traditional consolidation models. There are, however, still necessary costs with any consolidation. Ideally, equipment across the shared areas would be standardized. The cost of equipment, however, is a significant capital investment many municipalities are reluctant to make until absolutely necessary. Moreover, municipalities may simply analyze the capital costs of the regional system against their existing system and choose not to invest because of a lack of costs savings, without comparing opportunity costs and potential benefits of integration (i.e., lives saved). In addition, there will be one-time consolidation and coordination costs during the implementation process. With voluntary buy-in solution, if the region does not have a system already in place, there will be additional capital costs for buildings and equipment.

Systems Integration. The Computer Aided Dispatch and Records Management System (CAD/RMS) is critical in the PSAP operations. Many police departments in Connecticut purchase proprietary CAD/RMS systems that may not be able to tie in with other systems in neighboring municipalities. This information, in general, is not shared across municipalities. Municipalities are also on different contracts and schedules with their CAD/RMS systems. Integrating the CAD/RMS is a critical piece to any consolidation and will require careful planning and selection of the right system for the region to allow for integration and easier ability for towns to move from their current system.

Continuing and effective service provision. In implementing either of the two options, planning will be critical to the continuity of service throughout the transition process. In addition, effective transfer of data and sharing of local knowledge will be critical on enabling continual service that addresses local knowledge and service concerns.

➤ *People Challenges*

Challenges related to people will be more difficult to overcome and will require state assistance, encouragement, and incentives. The primary challenges in this area are political opposition as well as union or labor concerns.

Political Opposition. Historically, opposition to PSAP consolidation is not technical, but political. Some municipalities or fire districts often have stakeholders who are indifferent to consolidation, and in some cases, publicly against consolidation efforts. In addition, public attitude and concerns over “dark stations” must be addressed at the beginning of the process and continually throughout the various stages of implementation. State incentives and encouragement would help support COGs in this effort while working towards PSAP consolidation to effect significant increases in public safety and security.

Union, Employee and Labor Concerns. For PSAP dispatchers who are under union contract any integration / regionalization would require transition periods or negotiations so that any union or labor concerns are addressed. In addition, for PSAPs that have police officers who act as dispatchers (whether regularly or on an as-needed basis) expectations and requirements also will have to be negotiated and addressed in any consolidation process. In general, organizational changes to the PSAP structure may create concerns for PSAP employees. As needed in any consolidation effort that impacts employment, those concerns should be addressed throughout the process.

1.5. PSAP Conclusion

CTCOG believes there is a way forward regarding PSAP consolidation. Clear goals, the right incentives and the right investment from the state will provide a pathway to help move this process forward. Bills in this legislative session (HB6052 and HB6302) may be important first steps. In the meantime, in addition to the items outlined above, each COG will continue to respond to its members and plan to conduct various activities to help in moving towards effective PSAP consolidation.

2. Phase-in Approach to Regional Municipal Assessment

Although each region and COG have different needs and different levels to which some assessment functions have been regionalized (or are exploring opportunities in assessment), this is another area where there are unified efforts and consistent themes and plans throughout all COGs.

There are several distinct areas that can be addressed in the phased in regional municipal assessment at the state or CTCOG level. They are as follows:

1. Data Standardization
2. Software and Vendor Procurement
3. Effective Collection and Customer Facing Solutions
4. Personnel Qualifications and Standardization.
5. Regional revaluation

2.1. Data Standardization

Currently CTGIS Network and OPM are working on creating standardized reports for municipalities to export their Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA) data. Each region currently collects this information per statute and standardizing this information will enable back-office service provision and better development of regional tools and studies. This effort is currently underway.

Moreover, some towns do not have accurate or updated parcel data. Many small municipalities lack the necessary resources to update parcel information frequently. State assistance in ensuring consistent and accurate parcel data across the entire state would enhance the use of standardized CAMA data and regional GIS systems.

Consistent CAMA data combined with regularly updated planimetric data would offer the opportunity for more accurate assessments and discovery and listing of properties or portions of properties that have not been assessed but should be.

In addition to CAMA and parcel data, digitization of land records is the foundation for enabling regional back-office workflows and shared building department approaches.

2.2. Software and Vendor Procurement

➤ *Software*

Municipalities vary widely in their assessment software. There are multiple vendors, but also multiple versions within vendors. Moreover, some assessment vendors will only work with a limited number of software applications and will not perform assessment services for some municipalities with different software. Consequently, reviewing and cataloging what software municipalities are using and potentially initiating statewide or regional procurement opportunities could offer an area of potential savings.

A common software solution would also assist with better and more effective vendor procurement and easier interface with the chosen vendor.

Challenges of creating the common software solution is the willingness of municipalities to participate. The costs of converting to a new software coupled with the cost of retraining staff often cause hesitation - even from one version to an upgrade of the same software. This additionally hinders the filling of vacancies for Assessor jobs in towns where the software in use is not understood by an otherwise qualified applicant. The state could conduct a common bid for CAMA software and in turn work with the Assessment Association to provide training and technical assistance.

➤ *Vendor Procurement*

CTCOG would like to note that there are only a few vendors who have the capability of servicing the revaluation of an entire region. In addition, the variation across municipalities poses the real challenge in vendor procurement. Some municipalities will use the vendor for all properties - others conduct elements themselves as well as variations in usage of data mailers. There is considerable diversity across even similar or neighboring municipalities. Given this reality, any expectations of procurement and savings from regional revaluation procurement should be approached with caution.

There are two potential approaches to structuring regional vendor procurement. One method is for the participating municipalities to structure their assessment on a rotating basis over five years, such that the vendor has consistent workflow throughout the life of the contract. Another method is to have all the participating municipalities have their re-assessment performed in the same year. NECCOG has successfully used an approach where first, revaluation dates are restructured so that there is an equalization of parcels per year. Second, NECCOG's vendor conducts a full inspection on 50% of parcels each year and use that information to provide the so-called statistical update. This was designed by assessors and has worked very well. All methods have their strength and weaknesses. Statutorily, CTCOG recommends municipalities and regions having the ability to structure their procurement and assessment in a format that best fits the regional needs.

2.3. Effective Collection and Customer Facing Solutions

In discussing and reviewing assessment and collection, municipalities have little or no information on the benchmark of what constitutes effective tax assessment and collection. Setting standards or understanding and communicating standards to municipal leaders is one of the first steps in receiving buy-in for regional assessment.

Another area of need in some municipalities is the need for effective customer-facing solutions. Many of the smaller municipalities have part time assessors and face challenges in hiring a part time assessor but in also servicing municipal customers because the part time assessor is only available once or twice a week during limited hours. These municipalities would benefit from a

consolidated effort that could enable access to an assessor by phone or virtually every day of the week and in-person office hours on a more consistent basis.

2.4. Benefits of Regional Assessment

The goal of regionalized municipal assessment should be multi layered: increased and better customer service through more effective data, and in some cases, more assessor availability, and finally, improved accuracy of existing assessments and enhanced discovery of under/unassessed property, ensuring a fair and equal burden for all taxpayers. All these areas are benefits which would benefit both the municipality and the citizen.

CTCOG would like to note that those hard dollar savings do exist in various areas in regionalizing assessment, but those savings will not be significant enough to motivate many municipalities to “buy-in”. The alternative benefits (including increased revenue through better assessment and effective collections) are more likely to motivate municipalities to pursue opportunities in Regional Assessment.

2.5. Where the State Can Help

Given the challenges and some opposition to regional assessment, some areas where the State can be helpful or assist COGs are outlined below.

- Continue to assist and encourage the CAMA standardization efforts.
- Standardize motor vehicle assessment at a statewide level. Comparatively speaking, motor vehicle evaluation, assessment and appeals require a larger portion of the assessment time than the value it offers. Standardizing motor vehicle assessments, for example by a set statewide depreciation schedule from MSRP, would eliminate considerable amount of work and effort by the assessor without sacrificing quality, revenues, and local control.
- Allow municipalities the use of GIS and orthoimagery in lieu of physical visits. This would enable municipalities to focus on high value changes more effectively and drastically reduce costs.
- Encourage digitization of land records, building documents and workflows to facilitate shared back off solutions.
- Support the creation and maintenance of high quality statewide base map data in GIS. Include aerial photography, , municipal and parcel boundary layers and planimetric dataset (road and building footprints, which are critical for efficient and accurate property discovery and change detection).
- Consider a consistent high resolution orthographic aerial acquisition and planimetric updates on a regularly scheduled basis. Many state agencies already commission and use some level of orthographic aerial acquisition services. Many of these are not helpful to municipalities because of the low level of resolution. Given the relative

inexpensiveness of such a project (\$2 - \$2.5 million dollars for the entire state), a consistent statewide flight would benefit all regions and should be part of the state's budget and process instead of projects that happen intermittently and unpredictably.

2.6. CTCOG's Role in Assessment

CTCOG will continue to support the current efforts in CAMA data standardization across municipalities, including efforts to improve statewide GIS.

CTCOG will continue to explore opportunities to help provide better assessment services, especially in the smaller municipalities as well as in vendor procurement.

Finally, CTCOG will work towards additional back-end support and efficiencies including increasing availability of public information and documentation.

3. COVID-19 Recovery Activities

In March 2020, Connecticut's Regional Councils of Governments were called upon by the Governor to lead the long-term recovery planning from the COVID-19 Pandemic. The COGs were also asked to support their DEMHS emergency planning regions in both planning for response and recovery emergency support functions. Additionally, each COG has supported their municipalities and CEOs in addressing the challenges facing municipal governments during COVID.

Although not originally included in our approved FY21 RSG work plans, RSG has allowed COGs to continue supporting state, regional, and local response and recovery efforts. This includes helping the state's recovery and resiliency contractor the Global Resilience Institute / McCyrstal Group, leading the five DEMHS region long-term recovery planning steering committees, participating in state steering committees, identifying unmet needs in our communities and regions, planning for COVID-19 testing and vaccination sites, and applying to EDA for economic recovery planning grants.