



July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011

# SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

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## Council Members (January 2011)

Bethany	FS Derrylyn Gorski
Branford	FS Anthony DaRos
East Haven	Mayor April Capone Almon
Guilford	FS Joseph Mazza
Hamden	Mayor Scott Jackson
Madison	FS Fillmore McPherson
Meriden	Mayor Michael Rohde
Milford	Mayor James Richetelli, Jr.
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

## INTRODUCTION

This report highlights the major activities of the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) during the **2010-2011 fiscal year**.

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

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

## SCRCOG Staff (January 2011)

Carl Amento	Executive Director
Albert Ruggiero	Principal Planner
Stephen Dudley	Transportation Planner
James Rode	Transportation Planner
Eugene Livshits	Regional Planner
Mona Beavis	Assistant Planner

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## COMMITTEE MEMBERS (JANUARY 2011)

### Officers & Executive Committee

First Selectman Edward M. Sheehy - <i>Chairman</i>
First Selectman Anthony DaRos - <i>Vice Chair</i>
Mayor John Picard - <i>Secretary</i>
Mayor April Capone Almon - <i>Treasurer</i>
First Selectman James Zeoli
Mayor John DeStefano, Jr.
First Selectwoman Derrylyn Gorski
Mayor William Dickinson, Jr.

### Transportation Committee

Mayor William Dickinson, Jr. - <i>Chairman</i>
First Selectman Anthony DaRos
First Selectwoman April Capone Almon
Mayor John DeStefano, Jr.
Mayor Scott Jackson
Mayor James Richetelli, Jr.

### Regional Planning Commission

Bethany	Sharon Huxley
Branford	R. Charles Andres
East Haven	David Anderson
Guilford	Vacant
Hamden	Joseph McDonagh
Madison	Christopher Traugh
Meriden	William Lake
Milford	Susan Shaw
New Haven	Karyn Gilvarg
North Branford	Francis Lescovich
North Haven	Brian Cummings
Orange	Paul Kaplan
Wallingford	James Fitzsimmons
West Haven	John Panza
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	Vacant
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, 2010 to June 30, 2011, the RPC reviewed fifty-eight 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. Social, economic, housing, and demographic estimates, generated by the 2005-2009 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 as recognized by the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

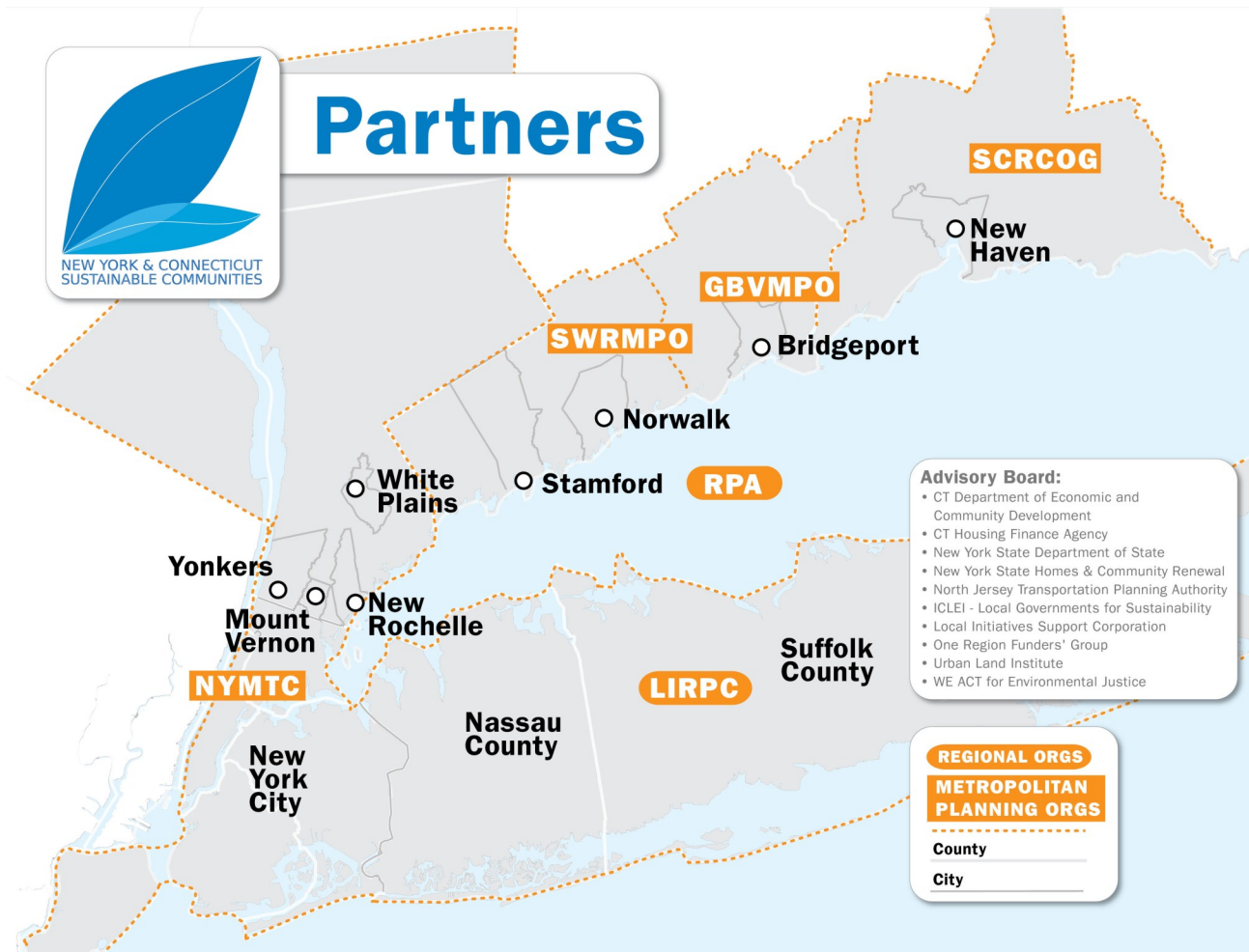
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## REGIONAL PLANNING PROGRAM

### Sustainable Communities

SCRCOG is a member of an unprecedented bi-state collaboration of cities, counties, and regional planning organizations which have come together to launch New York-Connecticut Sustainable Communities. This initiative has been awarded \$3.5 million from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant. The program is an inter-agency partnership for sustainable communities and is jointly implemented by HUD, the US Department of Transportation, and the US Environmental Protection Agency. The grant will be administered by Regional Plan Association, a nonprofit regional planning organization and will integrate housing, economic development, transportation and environmental planning. Below is a synopsis of the April 15, 2011 press release announcing the bi-state sustainability collaboration (full press release available on SCRCOG website).

The goal of the New York-Connecticut Sustainable Communities initiative is to reposition the NY-CT region to harness its innovation capabilities in a competitive global environment, build on its strong foundation of energy efficiency, and become as equitable as it is efficient. Its primary focus is to leverage the most extensive and robust transit system in the nation by developing livable communities with mixed-income housing and employment at significant nodes in the MTA Metro-North Railroad and MTA Long Island Rail Road network.



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

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## REGIONAL PLANNING PROGRAM

### ***Sustainable Communities*** (continued from previous page)

The New York-Connecticut Sustainable Communities initiative will implement sixteen interrelated projects that address the region's complex challenges at multiple scales—metropolitan, community, corridor and sub-region—to expand economic opportunity; foster new affordable, energy-efficient housing; provide more transportation choices; strengthen existing communities; and make the region more globally competitive.

Region-wide activities will provide a framework to guide sustainability planning at both regional and local levels. All partners will participate, with Regional Plan Association and the four metropolitan planning organizations—NYMTC, SWRPA, GBVMPO and SCRCOG—leading these activities.

Sustainability Plan Enhancement: The region has several comprehensive plans, from regional transportation-land use plans to county master plans to municipal sustainability plans. This activity will identify ways to better align the plans with each other and with federal and state regulations, and link them with an execution plan to overcome geographic and functional silos that impede putting them into action.

Knowledge Sharing: To sustain and grow the effort, the initiative will create a network of engaged government officials, civic and community leaders, business leaders, entrepreneurs, planners and private citizens that cuts across geographic, racial, ethnic, income and programmatic boundaries. Activities will be organized around two committees, a Northern Sector committee for communities in the Metro-North service area and an Eastern Sector committee for the LIRR service area.

Regional Housing Analysis: Regional Plan Association will analyze the impediments for residents of the region to take advantage of housing opportunities throughout the region without regard to race, ethnicity, family status and other characteristics. The analysis will identify opportunities to link transportation, employment and housing resources in order to promote fair and affordable housing in high opportunity areas.

The place-based project in the South Central Region is focused on New Haven's Union Station. The goal of the project is to convert the existing historic Union Station into a new mixed-use intermodal transit-oriented community. As part of a larger plan, the City will move conceptual plans to the implementation phase for structuring parking near the commuter and inter-city rail station to free up land that is currently being used as surface parking for new transit-oriented development.



Photo: Union Station, New Haven; Credit: Kindra Clineff / [www.visitnewhaven.com](http://www.visitnewhaven.com)

More information about NY-CT Sustainable Communities can be found at [www.sustainableNYCT.org](http://www.sustainableNYCT.org).

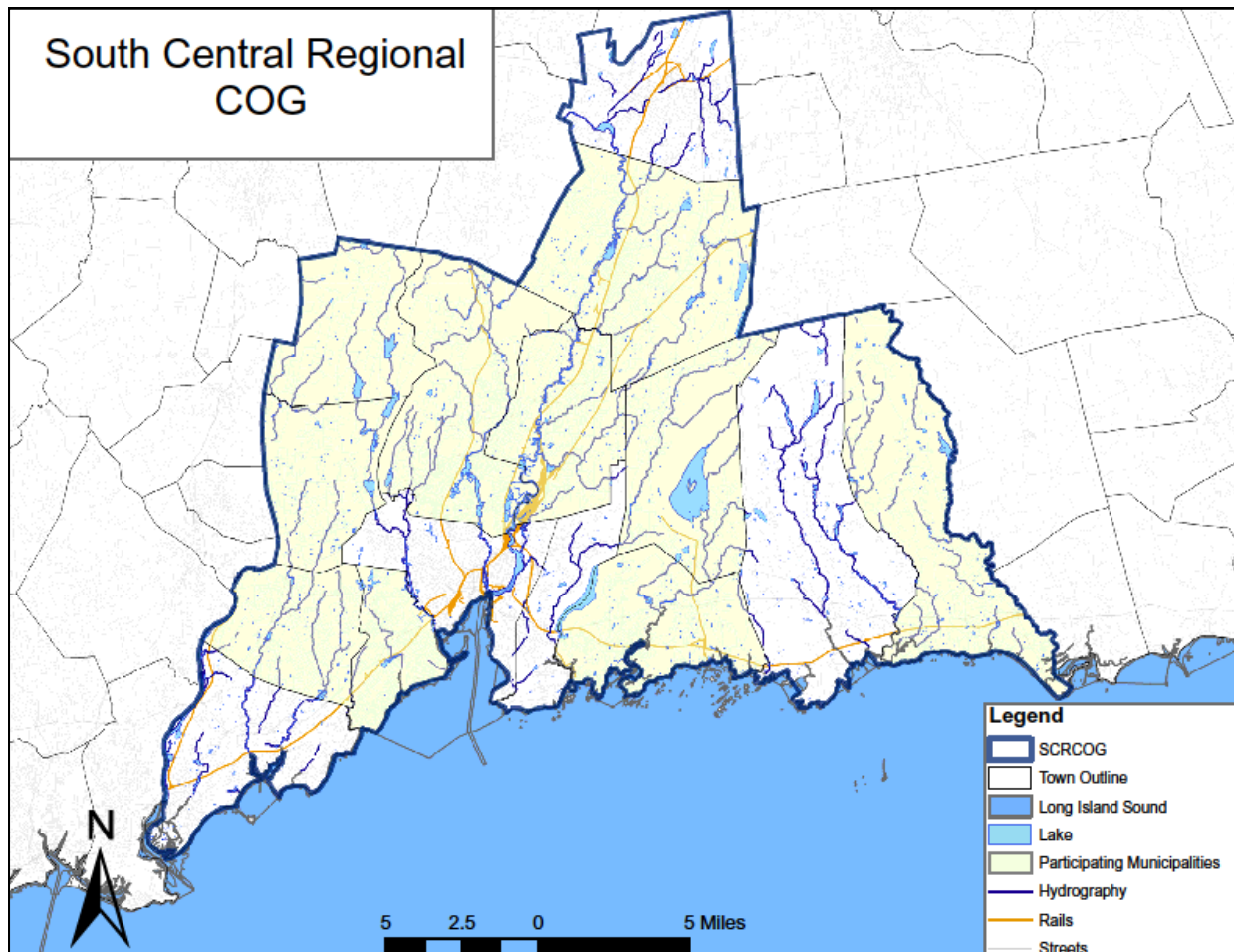
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## REGIONAL PLANNING PROGRAM

### *Regional Pre-disaster Hazard Mitigation Plan*

SCRCOG has applied for a grant to develop a multi-jurisdiction pre-disaster hazard mitigation (PDM) plan for ten municipalities in the Region. The PDM plan the region has applied for is being administered by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The participating municipalities (Bethany, Branford, Hamden, Madison, North Branford, North Haven, Orange, Wallingford, West Haven, and Woodbridge) are not covered by an approved FEMA Hazard Mitigation Plan and are vulnerable to potential damage created by natural hazards. An overview of each of the participating jurisdictions was included as part of the grant application. The participating jurisdictions have signed letters of intent to participate in the planning activity. The remaining five municipalities in the Region (East Haven, Guilford, Meriden, Milford, and New Haven) have already completed a PDM plan or are currently working on such a plan.

The South Central Region Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan will allow the participating municipalities to address mitigation of multiple natural hazards. An approved plan will also allow participating municipalities to obtain federal funds to address potential natural hazards (see next page for examples of federal funding). More information regarding potential federal funding can be found at <http://www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-assistance>.



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## REGIONAL PLANNING PROGRAM

### *Regional Pre-Disaster Hazard Mitigation Plan (continued from previous page)*

#### **FEMA-Administered Grant Programs**

- ◆ Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)
- ◆ Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM)
- ◆ Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA)
- ◆ Repetitive Flood Claims (RFC)
- ◆ Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL)

If SCRCOG is awarded the grant, the planning process will be structured using FEMA's "Location Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidance" and the "State and Local Mitigation Planning How-To Guides." Additionally, the plan will be prepared pursuant to the requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and the implementing regulations set forth by the Interim Final Rule published in the Federal Register on February 26, 2002 (44 CFR §201.6) and finalized on October 31, 2007.

SCRCOG Staff will coordinate the overall planning effort, which will include the selection of a consultant to work on the project. The plan will be prepared using a direct representation model where the advisory committee will be comprised of representatives from each of the participating jurisdictions. To ensure a comprehensive approach is taken to reduce the Region's vulnerability to natural hazards, appropriate stakeholders within the municipalities will be consulted throughout the planning process.

Plan adoption will occur at both a regional and local level. The adopted plan will be submitted to the Connect-

#### **Potential Benefits of a PDM Plan**

- ◆ Access to Grant Funding
- ◆ Reduce Potential Damage Created by Hazards
- ◆ Comprehensive Approach to Mitigation of Inter-Jurisdictional Hazards
- ◆ Eliminates Duplication of Efforts
- ◆ Improve Post-Disaster Recovery Implementation

#### **Potential Hazards**

- ◆ River/Coastal Flooding
- ◆ Severe Thunderstorm/Tornado
- ◆ Hurricane/Tropical Storm
- ◆ Nor'easter
- ◆ Severe Winter Storm, Ice Jam

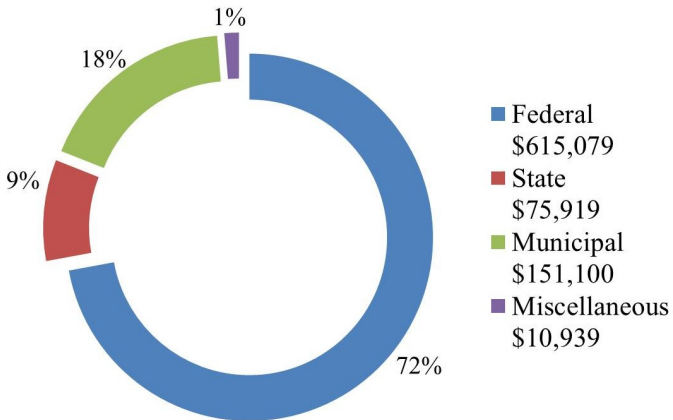
#### **Examples of Hazard Mitigation Projects**

- ◆ Structural elevations
- ◆ Floodproofing
- ◆ Buyouts/Acquisitions
- ◆ Public Education
- ◆ Regulatory changes (Zoning, Floodplain)

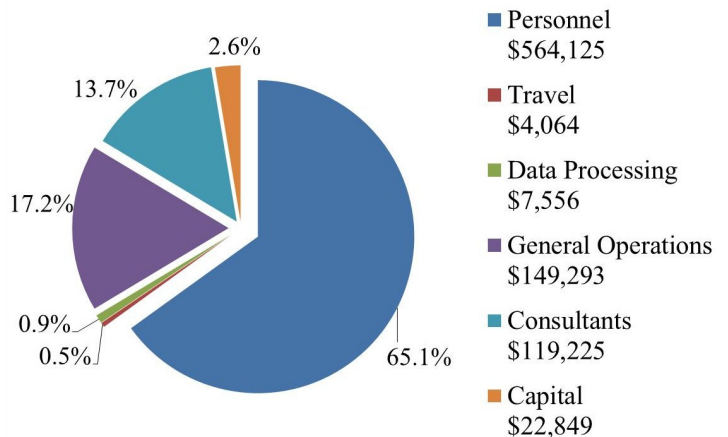
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## ANNUAL BUDGET JULY 1, 2010 to JUNE 30, 2011

### Revenues: \$853,037



### Expenses: \$867,112



## 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 2010 - FFY 2013 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 the 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 2011

The following studies were started in FY 2011 and will be completed in FY 2012:

### [Town of Madison Downtown Transportation Transit Study](#)

This study will assess transportation and transit impacts for the downtown area bounded by US Route 1 on the south, Route 79 to the west, Amtrak railroad to the north, and Wall Street to the east to evaluate future potential impacts on traffic operation, parking, and pedestrian circulation associated with development of the Region and increased rail transportation uses.

### [Town of North Haven Traffic Calming Study - Spring Road](#)

This study will review traffic conditions in the Spring Road area, including reviewing previous concerns, preparing options, and conducting public outreach.

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## **UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM 2011** (continued from previous page)

### **Town of Bethany Road Study**

This study will review existing conditions of town roads and advise town on ratings to help town implement a pavement management system.

### **Town of Bethany Transit Study for New Haven Mini-Transit Service**

A study to determine viability of transit service to serve Bethany and connect with New Haven to offer transit options and reduce single occupant vehicle trips to New Haven.

### **Town of Hamden East/West Transportation Study**

This study will evaluate east/west routes in town and make recommendations on routings, traffic management, highway amenities, and development potentials with recommendations for better east-west circulation, improved mobility, safety, and pedestrian and bicycle circulation.

### **Town of Wallingford Transit Bus Ridership and Routing Study**

Study to focus on service on and along U.S. Route 5 and North Plains Industrial Road/Washington Street to service community organizations addressing increased demand and service schedule enhancements.

### **City of Meriden Trail Study**

Study to recommend a comprehensive trail system which interconnects with regional goals and plans, improving transportation opportunities for Meriden and surrounding communities.

### **City of New Haven Downtown Modal Split Study**

Study will gather data from existing sources and review previous estimates of mode split for several representative types of development (residential, commercial, institutional) to provide framework for better review and confirmation of projected volume/transportation demand as development emerges.

### **Regional School Bus Study**

Review potential energy savings of alternate fuels for school transportation fleets and implementation issues.

### **Regional Transit Data Acquisition**

Acquire and collate data in preparation for update of regional transit portion of TransCAD model.

### **Regional Road Classification Study**

Review functional classification of roadways with appropriate municipal officials to insure classification reflects municipal classifications.

## **OTHER NEWS**

In Fall 2010, REX Development (REX) moved into the SCRCOG offices. REX, originally founded as the Regional Growth Partnership in 1996, is the economic development entity for the fifteen towns served by the South Central Regional Council of Governments. Among REX's many responsibilities is the development of the Region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), which contains strategies to create jobs and capitalize on existing economic opportunities. The co-location of REX and SCRCOG allows for greater collaboration in addressing regional issues.