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BOARD MEMBERS	
Bethany	FS Paula Cofrancesco
Branford	FS James Cosgrove
East Haven	Mayor Joseph Carfora
Guilford	FS Matthew Hoey
Hamden	Mayor Lauren Garrett
Madison	FS Peggy Lyons
Meriden	City Manager Tim Coon
Milford	Mayor Benjamin Blake
New Haven	Mayor Justin Elicker
North Branford	Mayor Jeffrey Macmillen
North Haven	FS Michael Freda
Orange	FS James Zeoli
Wallingford	Mayor William Dickinson
West Haven	Mayor Nancy Rossi
Woodbridge	FS Beth Heller

SCRCOG STAFF	
Carl Amento	Executive Director
Laura Francis	Deputy Director / Director of Transportation Planning
Christopher Rappa	Finance Director
James Rode	Principal Transportation Planner
Rebecca Andreucci	Senior Transportation Planner/Finance Manager
Benjamin Lovejoy	Director of Regional Planning and Municipal Services
Stephanie Camp	Regional Planner

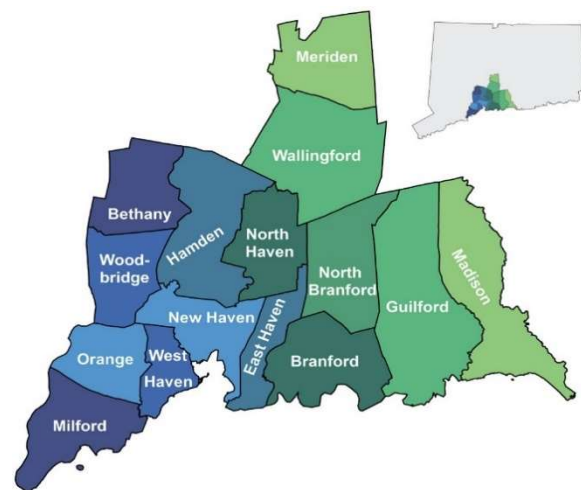
Joan Paglinco	Administrative Assistant
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This report highlights the major activities of the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) during the 2022-2023 fiscal year. SCRCOG’s primary role as a COG is to bring together local governments to coordinate transportation, land use, and environmental planning and municipal services programs on a regional basis. All fifteen municipalities also belong to the region’s Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which oversees the federally funded transportation program.

SCRCOG’s transportation responsibilities include administering a regional metropolitan transportation plan (MTP), developing a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and developing the region’s Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP).

SCRCOG’s regional planning responsibilities include maintaining the South Central Region Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD), Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, regional recreational trail mapping program, and a Regional Geographic Information System (GIS) Program. Additionally, the Regional Planning Commission reviews zoning regulations, subdivision applications, and land use changes that affect member municipalities.

SCRCOG’s municipal services programs promote efficiencies and cost-savings initiatives through regional energy conservation, finance, grants, information technology, public works,



purchasing, and solid waste and recycling programs.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (CALENDAR YEAR 2023)

FS James Zeoli – <i>Chair</i>
FS Paula Cofrancesco – <i>Vice Chair</i>
FS Peggy Lyons – <i>Secretary</i>
FS Lauren Garrett – <i>Treasurer</i>
FS Matt Hoey – <i>Immediate Past Chair</i>
Mayor William Dickinson, Jr.
Vacant
Mayor Justin Elicker

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (CALENDAR YEAR 2022)

FS Matthew Hoey – <i>Chair</i>
FS James Zeoli – <i>Vice Chair</i>
FS Paula Cofrancesco – <i>Secretary</i>
FS Peggy Lyons – <i>Treasurer</i>
FS Michael Freda – <i>Immediate Past Chair</i>
Mayor William Dickinson, Jr.
Mayor Benjamin Blake
Mayor Justin Elicker

ADMINISTRATIVE AND PERSONNEL SUBCOMMITTEE

FS Matthew Hoey – <i>Committee Chair</i>	FS Paula Cofrancesco
FS James Zeoli	FS Peggy Lyons

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Mayor William Dickinson, Jr. – <i>Committee Chair</i>	FS James Cosgrove
Vacant	FS Michael Freda
Mayor Justin Elicker	Mayor Lauren Garrett
FS Matthew Hoey	

TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Bethany	<i>Vacant</i>
Branford	John Hoeffler
East Haven	Jonathan Bodwell
Guilford	Janice Plaziak
Hamden	Stephen White
Madison	John Iennaco
Meriden	Brian Ennis
Milford	Justin Rosen
New Haven	Giovanni Zinn
North Branford	Victor Benni
North Haven	Andrew Bevilacqua
Orange	Robert Brinton
Wallingford	Alison Kapushinski
West Haven	Abdul Quadir
Woodbridge	<i>Vacant</i>

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Bethany	Alex Hutchinson
Branford	Charles Andres – <i>Chair</i>
East Haven	<i>Vacant</i>
Guilford	Sean Cosgrove
Hamden	Jay Cruikshank
Madison	Carol Snow
Meriden	Kevin Curry – <i>Vice Chair</i>
Milford	Robert Satti
New Haven	<i>Vacant</i>
North Branford	Tricia Mase
North Haven	Theresa Ranciato-Viele
Orange	Tom Torrenti
Wallingford	Jeffrey Kohan
West Haven	<i>Vacant</i>
Woodbridge	Andrew Skolnick – <i>Secretary</i>



TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

OVERVIEW

The SCRCOG Transportation Planning team is involved in the development of strategies, policies and infrastructure to facilitate the movement of people and goods efficiently and sustainably in the South Central Region in partnership with the US Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT).

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The South Central Region Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2023 -2050 (MTP) is a long-range planning document that lays out Transportation goals over a 20-year period and provides a framework to help guide the use of federal funding in the Region. The MTP provides direction for the Region on major policy issues on all modes of transportation. It includes regionally significant projects and investment programs planned out over the 20-year timeline. The plan is updated at least every 4 years. Projects included in the MTP are ultimately included in the TIP.

The process to update the MTP began in the summer of 2022. An initial draft MTP was developed with the SCRCOG Transportation Committee and stakeholders in the region. An online survey was posted in January 2023 to gather input and over 180 responses were received. 2 public meetings were held in February to discuss the needs of the region. The draft MTP was posted on the SCRCOG website February 22nd. During the 45-day comment period another public meeting was held on March 8. The comment period ended on April 8th and the final plan was adopted by the policy board on April 26, 2023.

FY 2021-2024 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

The FY2021-FY2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a four-year financial document that identifies all projects expected to be funded with Federal participation in fiscal years 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024. Future funding (FYI) is provided for information purposes only.

The TIP is incorporated fully into the Connecticut Department of Transportation's (CTDOT) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). To be eligible for reimbursement, projects utilizing Federal Highway and Federal Transit Administration funding must be included in both the TIP and STIP.

Federal regulations require that both the STIP and TIP be "fiscally constrained. This means there must be a reasonable expectation of federal financial assistance to implement endorsed projects and that the funding sources must be identified for each project. All Projects are consistent with the goals identified in the fiscally constrained South Central Regional Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2019-2045 (MTP). And have been reviewed through CTDOT's Air Quality Conformity Determination process.

Once it is adopted the TIP does not remain stagnant. Project information is constantly being updated and new projects added. The STIP and TIP must be updated regularly, and these changes are made through an amendment process at our regularly scheduled meetings. The SCRCOG Transportation Committee and SCRCOG Metropolitan Planning Organization approved 10 Amendments to the Transportation Improvement Program FY23. Details can be found on the SCRCOG website.

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (LOTICIP)

The Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) provides State funds to urbanized area municipal governments in lieu of Federal funds otherwise available through Federal transportation legislation. The LOTICIP is provided for in Section 74 of Public ACT 13-239. LOTICIP is established with substantially fewer constraints and requirements than currently exist when using Federal Title 23 USC funds. The South Central Region received and annual apportionment of \$11,572,000 in FY2023

In November of 2022, the Transportation Committee approved an updated list of 32 potential projects. 3 municipalities completed applications for the Region’s LOTICIP program. Currently, CTDOT has committed over \$40 Million dollars in state funding for 12 projects in 8 municipalities. And another \$11.5 million was provided to 3 municipalities for 5 projects in construction. A project list is provided below.

METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING (MAP) FORUM

LOTICIP	Capital Improvements	Various	Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program	2023/01/01	\$11,365,222.59
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The MAP Forum is comprised of nine adjacent MPOs and councils of government (COGs) in Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The members are; the South Central Regional Council of Governments, the Western Connecticut Council of Governments, the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, the Connecticut Metropolitan Council of Governments, the Capitol Region Council of Governments, the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments, New York Metropolitan Transportation Council, the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission in Pennsylvania, and the Orange County Transportation Council in New York State.

The Forum meets monthly and provides oppor-

tunities for better coordinated planning activities in the multi-state metropolitan region. Activities include multi-state freight planning, multi-state climate resilience, metropolitan mobility, and the map forum data hub.

UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is a comprehensive document that outlines the transportation planning activities and projects to be undertaken by a metropolitan planning organization (MPO) or a regional transportation planning agency. The UPWP serves as a guide for the transportation planning process over a specific period, typically one to three years.

The primary purpose of the UPWP is to establish a framework for transportation planning and funding allocation within a metropolitan area or region. It brings together the various stakeholders involved in transportation planning, such as government agencies, transit providers, local jurisdictions, and the public, to collaborate and coordinate their efforts.

UPWP Studies Completed in FY23

Regional Transportation Safety Plan

VN Engineers was retained by SCRCOG to update the 2017 Regional Transportation Safety Plan by analyzing 2017-2021 crash data and applying the information to identify countermeasures that can improve safety at cited high frequency crash corridors and intersections. The study includes a Safety Action Plan.

SCRCOG had committed to advancing roadway safety through its zero-goal resolution as

guided through the Action Plan. Transportation network improvements that address walking, biking, transit, and driving are strategically prioritized.

Congestion Management

VN Engineers was retained by SCRCOG to complete the regional congestion management process. This 2023 Congestion Management Process (CMP) Report represents a continuation of the South Central Regional Council of Governments' (SCRCOG) efforts to better understand the transportation system throughout the Region and in the Greater New Haven area. This report takes a systematic approach to identify and address congested areas within the region. The CMP is used to monitor and evaluate transportation system performance and congestion management strategies in a regional context to make the best use of federal, state, and regional funding resources.

A CMP provides the framework for measuring system performance and managing congestion for a region. This report is just a snapshot of an ongoing process. Activities that are part of the CMP

include data collection for quantifying system performance, determination of causes of congestion, consideration of alternatives to reduce congestion, implementation of programs and projects, and ongoing assessment to determine effectiveness of strategies. Inherent with a CMP is the focus on operations and management strategies to address congestion, rather than capacity improvements.

Walkability Study – Branford

Beta Group, Inc. was retained by SCRCOG for the Walkability Study for the Town of Branford. The goal of the study was to inventory elements of the existing pedestrian network, assess key elements of the pedestrian network based on condition and accessibility criteria, identify hazardous locations for pedestrians based on crash history, identify critical gaps to fill to improve the pedestrian network and to recommend short, mid, and long-term projects for implementation.

Farmington Canal Trail Crossings Evaluation Study - Hamden

WSP, USA was retained by SCRCOG for the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail Crossings Evaluation Study to perform a comprehensive inventory and evaluation of trail corridor crossings to improve the overall safety of trail users. Within the SCRCOG region of Connecticut, the trail runs through the municipalities of New Haven and Hamden. It runs along a former canal and rail line. The finished trail is a smooth 10-foot-wide paved swath. The project includes the portion of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail within the town of Hamden. The Farmington Canal Heritage Trail in Hamden is fully paved, and runs across the entire Town, parallel to state route 10 (Dixwell Avenue / Whitney Avenue) from the Cheshire line to the New Haven line. The trail is a portion of the East Coast Greenway. It provides a much-needed north-south route, exclusively for pedestrians and bicyclists. The study includes recommendations for safety improvements and cost estimates for implementation.

Route 10 Complete Street Study – Hamden

AKRF and VN Engineers were retained by SCRCOG to evaluate the existing transportation environment and to identify conceptual design improvements along the Route 10 (Dixwell Avenue) corridor. The goal of the study is to identify conceptual design improvements that enhance the pedestrian, bicycle and transit environment and improve multimodal traffic flow and safety on Route 10. The document includes corridor improvement strategies including implementation of a complete streets policy, enhancements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities, improvements to traffic operations and traffic calming measures to improve safety.

Dixwell Avenue and Whitney Avenue Intersection Improvements Feasibility Study – Hamden

BL Companies, Inc. was retained by SCRCOG to evaluate safety improvements at the intersection of Dixwell Avenue and Whitney Avenue in Hamden. Outcomes of the study were to create conceptual engineering drawings and prelimi-

nary cost estimates for the safety improvements. The study was particularly focused on safety of bicyclists and pedestrians. Short term recommendations include signal optimization and concurrent pedestrian signal phasing, while long term recommendations include a Whitney Avenue Road diet, Dixwell Avenue bike lanes, and sidewalk extensions throughout the corridor.

Bicycle-Pedestrian Safety Improvements Study – Madison

BL Companies, Inc. was retained by SCRCOG to evaluate existing challenges and opportunities to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety in Madison. The purpose of the study was to assess potential safety improvements along US Route 1 (Boston Post Road), West Wharf Road and Surf Club Road between the downtown area and the Surf Club and to provide conceptual engineering drawings and preliminary cost estimates.

Connecticut Loop Trail Connection Study – Meriden

VHB was retained by SCRCOG to evaluate and identify the most practical and feasible alignment for the final section of the Central Connecticut Loop Trail within the city. The CCLT is a multi-municipal effort to join a series of trails in the center of the state which includes the Air Line Trail, the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail, and the Charter Oak Greenway. This linkage would result in a (mostly off road) loop trail in the center of Connecticut, at over 110 miles in length, ultimately passing through 22 communities. The study includes a statement of existing conditions, possible alignments including a description of preferred alignment and opinion of probable cost for design and implementation.

Fountain Street Corridor Study – New Haven

CDM Smith was retained by SCRCOG to build upon the 2010 SCRCOG Whalley Avenue Corridor Study and the 2017 SCRCOG Westville Village Traffic and Parking Study. The goals of the study were to explore ways to improve Fountain Street to make the public right-of-way safer for all users; balance mobility for all modes of

travel; make the street more functional and environmentally beneficial by enhancing traffic flow and reducing vehicular stops and delays. The document includes improvements recommendations and opinions of probable cost.

Evaluation of Existing Structures – New Haven

RHS Consulting Design (RHS) was retained by SCRCOG to verify the existing condition of New Haven's mast arm structures that have been in service since the 1980's. The project included the development of an Inventory, documentation and the evaluation of Traffic structures including span poles overhead sign poles and other similar structures.

Northrop Road Study – Wallingford

SLR International Corp. was retained by SCRCOG in partnership with the Town of Wallingford and City of Meriden. The purpose of the study is to understand and identify existing issues and deficiencies related to the roadway's vertical and horizontal geometry, widths, drainage, traffic, and safety issues. The completed study includes a list of improvement recommendations and an opinion of probable costs that will inform implementation decisions.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan – West Haven

Beta Group, Inc. was retained by SCRCOG to create the plan for the City of West Haven. The plan includes the following: Existing Conditions Data Collection and Review; Network Assessment, Overview of Public Engagement.

The plan also includes a Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Improvement plan which consists of vision and goals, proposed bicycle and pedestrian facilities and system-wide program and policy recommendations. The recommendations are intended to promote an environment which will allow residents of the city of all ages and abilities to travel throughout West Haven safely and conveniently by walking or biking. The plan is also intended to focus on active transportation modes citywide and will be used to identify priorities for future projects and programs.

Business District Connectivity Study – Woodbridge

SLR International Corp. was retained by SCRCOG to develop a pedestrian-based connectivity master plan for the town of Woodbridge’s downtown district. The plan includes an inventory and analysis of existing conditions and an overview of public engagement. Also included is a connectivity masterplan that consists of conceptual streetscape sections, intersection concepts and a community driven priority for implementation. This project aims to continue and complement the work of the Woodbridge Economic Development Commission that completed a Conceptual Plan in 2013 and develop a vision with aspirational goals for the implementation of placemaking elements in the Business District.

Feasibility Study of Connecting Plains Road to Oronoque Road – Milford

WSP, USA was retained by SCRCOG to develop a feasibility study for connecting Plains Road to Oronoque Road via an at-grade rail crossing in Milford. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the feasibility of connecting the two roadways through a benefit-cost analysis. This analysis took into consideration the impacts to traffic circulation, surrounding residents and businesses, and Metro-North Railroad operations. The findings of the study indicate that it is not feasible to connect the two roadways.

Additional Transportation Staff Activities in FY23

The SCRCOG Transportation Team participates in the DEMHS Region 2 ESF – 1 Transportation Steering Committee. They participated in a Road Safety Audit in North Branford on June 21, 2023, and are participating in the Eastern Transportation Coalition Mileage-Based User Fee Study.

Laura Francis, Deputy Director/Director of Transportation Planning represented SCRCOG on a panel during the 16th Annual Transporta-

tion Mini-Series as part of the Women’s Transportation Seminar, CT2022. The panel, which consisted of CT Commissioner Mark Boughton, Kim Lesay, Bureau Chief Policy & Planning CTDOT, Kristin Hadjstylianos, Transportation Director WestCOG and Matt Hart, Executive Director of Capitol Region COG regarding the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL).

Laura Francis participated in a “Housing Policy Panel & Feedback Session” at a Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce meeting.

Laura Francis participated in the Route 146 Corridor Management Plan Working Group that consists of representatives from CTDOT, towns of Guilford and Branford.

Laura Francis serves as Chair of the DEMHS Region 2 ESF – 1 Transportation Steering Committee.

Laura Francis serves as Co-Chair of the Board of Directors of Sustainable, CT and is the SCRCOG Representative on U.S. Senator Murphy’s Transportation Advisory Committee. Laura Francis serves as SCRCOG Representative on the Connecticut T2 Center Safety Circuit Rider Advisory Committee.

Jim Rode, Principal Transportation Planner, continues to conduct quarterly Commuter Parking Lot Occupancy surveys for the region. The information is posted on the SCRCOG website and is communicated to CTDOT. The data informs planning decisions on the regional and statewide level.

Rebecca Andreucci, Senior Transportation Planner, who also serves as Finance Manager, worked with the member municipalities to collect updated parcel and CAMA files. These files are submitted yearly to the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM).

Rebecca Andreucci coordinated an effort with RiverCOG, SCCOG, CTDOT, and RIDOT to designate a United States Bike Route in the region. The proposed route will provide an alternate connection to the East Coast Greenway Trail between New Haven and Providence.

Rebecca Andreucci serves as SCRCOG's representative on the Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development (CT RC&D) Board. CT RC&D is a non-profit that assists with agricultural and environmental programming. Each COG in the state has one representative on the board.



REGIONAL PLANNING

OVERVIEW

SCRCOG is committed to addressing a diverse list of projects and providing technical assistance to its member municipalities. The land use and environmental activities within the region are focused on sustainability and include, but are not limited to, zoning, housing, hazard mitigation, and data collection. Projects are either mandated by the State of Connecticut General Statutes or recommended by the SCRCOG Board and the Regional Planning Commission.

SCRCOG's land use responsibilities revolve around advisory recommendations for statutory referrals and the preparation of the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development. Additional land use projects undertaken by the region include affordable housing, regional recreational trails, and Regional Hazard Mitigation Planning.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Housing Working Group Meetings

SCRCOG assisted member municipalities by offering its Regional Housing Working Group several workshops designed to help implement recommendations offered in CGS 8-30j affordable housing plans. In addition to these workshops, SCRCOG continued drafting efforts on a regional housing plan that would further assist the region's efforts to increase housing options. A draft Action Plan, which was requested by the SCRCOG Board of Directors, was completed and will be integrated into the draft plan. The Regional Housing Plan is scheduled to be

finalized during FY23-24 and will serve to further assist in regional housing goals established in the 2018-2028 SCRCOG Regional Plan of Conservation and Development.

RSG funding was also used to fund the ongoing work of SCRCOG's Affordable Housing Consultant, David Fink. As the former Policy Director at Partnership for Strong Communities, Fink was able to continue facilitating SCRCOG's Housing Working Group and Municipal Affordable Housing Committees by offering public meetings, assisting with regional trainings, and providing policy analysis throughout the year. Fink also served as an on-call consultant to multiple SCRCOG member municipalities often coordinating meetings with municipal officials and developers, providing comments on proposals, and assisting in the development of affordable housing proposals. SCRCOG hosted twelve (12) Housing Working Group meetings throughout the 2022-23 fiscal year. The recordings of these meetings are made available to the public on the SCRCOG website, and these videos provide a free resource for municipalities, advocates, and stakeholders to further their knowledge.

Community Conversations Initiative

New for FY22-23 was the creation of a service called Community Conversations. This program saw the hiring of a community organizer consultant who was tasked with assisting municipalities with the creation of local stakeholder engagement groups. The consultant conducted "Power Mapping" exercises that assisted participating municipalities with identifying key stakeholders. These individuals were then invited to meet with municipal officials to give them input regarding their respective community needs. The hosted conversations were designed to create beneficial social capital between the municipality and local stakeholders. The goal was to build trust and to provide the municipal officials with direct feedback to be better informed of public desires when making

land use decisions around housing development. Five SCRCOG municipalities (Hamden, Guilford, Wallingford, Meriden, and Madison) participated in the “Community Conversations” program in FY 2022-2023. This program will be continued and expanded in FY 2023-2024

In addition to facilitating the power mapping sessions, the consultant also conducted two separate trainings for our region’s leaders and stakeholders at the SCRCOG office. The offerings were focused on how to have effective communication between residents and leaders particularly when broaching the often-difficult subject of affordable housing development. This project was so successful that it was renewed for the FY 2023-2024 RSG Spending Plan and continues to be a highly valuable program available to the region’s municipalities.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

CT Council of Governments

Executive Director Carl Amento and Deputy Director Laura Francis attended the monthly Connecticut Councils of Governments (CTCOG) meetings and provided regular updates on SCRCOG regional initiatives. The agency participated in robust discussions on legislative priorities, improvement of regional programs, and the progress of grant-funded initiatives. During the second half of the fiscal year, participation in the CTCOG meetings helped facilitate the creation of the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Collaboration Group. This collaboration helped coordinate state and local planning efforts on the CRPG program and was highly useful in aligning regional goals for the grant’s requirements.

Land Use Trainings

SCRCOG provided a variety of informational and training events focused on housing and land use through workshops conducted under

the Affordable Housing Working Group. An expert consultant with deep knowledge and experience in the housing field introduced the municipal housing specialists, planners and CEO’s to the variety of approaches which could be undertaken to increase the number and desirability of affordable housing choices in the region. The group met monthly throughout the fiscal year and provided participants with expert presentations, information on a variety of topics related to housing, as that issue intersected with issues in land use and the environment. These workshops included topics such as:

- The Missing Middle – Developing Housing in Lower Density Communities
- Nitty Gritty of Wastewater – Shared Septic Systems for Multi-unit Developments
- Housing Insecurity – Addressing Regional Homelessness Challenges
- Legislative Update – 2023 Legislative Session Bill Overview

Through these workshops, our region’s planners and advocates learned helpful insight and knowledge on addressing and overcoming challenges in developing affordable housing.

SCRCOG enlisted the services of a second consultant to assist the SCRCOG municipalities and their citizens with information, education and civic engagement in the area of affordable housing development.

Further regional support for land use was provided by SCRCOG through its Regional Planning Commission work, land use training for municipal officials, GIS mapping support for municipalities, recreational trails mapping, and compiling CAMA data, all described in more detail below.

Regional support for the environment was pro-

vided in SCRCOG’s work as lead for the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant for the New Haven-Milford MSA, and its extensive work in the subject area of Solid Waste & Recycling, including, food waste separation and composting, as well as assistance to municipal Sustainable Materials Management Co-collection food waste diversion pilot programs.

GIS REPORTING

SCRCOG continues to support access to pertinent GIS-based information through a publicly accessible GIS portal on the SCRCOG website. This portal contains access to maps depicting parcel information, zoning, open space, tree canopy cover, and other land use categories. SCRCOG also produces an annual Regional Demographic Profile of the region and its individual municipalities. SCRCOG manages a data request portal where municipalities can request information on a variety of subjects including demographic, economic, and environmental data.

REGIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION

SCRCOG completed an update to the Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan for fifteen municipalities in Greater New Haven. The purpose of this plan is to provide the region with a comprehensive examination of all natural hazards affecting the area and help reduce the South Central Region’s vulnerability to natural hazards and ease the burden of keeping communities safe and resilient. This plan is required to be updated every five years and was adopted by all fifteen municipalities. It’s a pre-condition to receive FEMA grants.

REGIONAL RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM

The Regional Recreational Trail Brochures are available on the [SCRCOG Regional Trails webpage](#) and in the [Regional GIS Interactive Viewer](#). SCRCOG has continued to make periodic changes and adjustments to the trail maps and brochures through collaboration with municipal staff, land trusts, conservation commissions, and the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority (RWA).

SCRCOG maintains a database and provides paper brochures of the region’s trail system to participating municipalities for distribution to the public. The maps are also available for pick up at SCRCOG’s North Haven office. Municipalities can also request that maps be dropped off at various locations and SCRCOG staff completes that delivery request. Updating the regional trails mapping program is planned to be completed in FY23-24 and SCRCOG is currently exploring vendors that will assist in that process.

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The South Central Regional Planning Commission (RPC) continued to hold monthly meetings to review statutory referrals, which included amendments to zoning regulations, subdivision applications, and Municipal Plans of Conservation and Development. The RPC resolutions/comments are advisory and are forwarded to municipalities adjacent to the municipality where the referral originated. The RPC reviewed a total of twenty-two (22) referrals from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023.

22

Referrals Reviewed
by RPC in FY23.

CAMA DATA

Staff at SCRCOG coordinated the collection and submission of CAMA data to OPM in a timely manner during the 2022-23 fiscal year. The data was collected from all SCRCOG municipalities and there were no issues involved in executing this responsibility in FY22-23.

SUSTAINABLE CT FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Through a partnership with Sustainable CT, SCRCOG hosts an intern every summer to assist towns with receiving Sustainable CT certification. The interns provide technical support to municipalities and also assist on COG projects that align with Sustainable CT goals. In the summer of 2023, Katie Meder, a Chemistry and Biology student from Wheaton College, supported SCRCOG municipalities with certification. There are six (6) certified towns in the SCRCOG region: Brandford and West Haven are Bronze Certified; while Hamden, Guilford, and Milford are Silver Certified; and New Haven is Gold Certified. Finally, Guilford and New Haven both earned “Climate Leader” designation, respectively.

UCONN MPP/MPA PROGRAM

SCRCOG hosted a UConn graduate intern from the School of Public Policy and Administration during the 2022-23 fiscal year. This was the third consecutive year in which SCRCOG hosted one or two such interns. The FY 2022-2023 intern assisted with a variety of research, analysis, and graphic design projects, in addition to helping SCRCOG staff coordinate meetings and events. Most notably, the intern created a series of template flyers, design guides and marketing materials for the various events which SCRCOG hosted. The intern also helped facilitate a region-wide forum on best practices for

regional planning collaboration. The intern also assisted in drafting, editing, and updating the SCRCOG monthly newsletter. The intern completed helpful preliminary research for the EPA’s Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program. She also assisted SCRCOG’s CPRG project by creating a regional stakeholder contact list, compiling a list of regional events for stakeholder engagement, and established a database of Climate Action Plans.



MUNICIPAL SERVICES

OVERVIEW

SCRCOG is committed to developing regional programs that promote operational efficiencies and cost-savings. The municipal services program focuses on the areas of energy conservation, information technology and cybersecurity, grant writing and administration, procurement, and solid waste, recycling, food waste diversion, and municipal composting.

As part of the municipal services program, SCRCOG established working groups of municipal department heads and staff members with similar roles to foster greater collaboration within the region. The Working Groups meet to discuss regional opportunities, current issues, and best practices.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND CYBERSECURITY

Cybersecurity Training

SCRCOG expanded its cybersecurity training program by providing additional user seats to the region's municipalities. The program utilizes KnowBe4, an integrated platform for security awareness training combined with simulated phishing attacks, to educate municipal employees and enhance their awareness of cybersecurity threats. Municipalities work directly with Novus Insight, Inc. to administer the program, with some towns opting to have greater administrative roles. As of June 2023, over 2,000 municipal employees, across eight municipalities, are participating in this training program.

Regional Cybersecurity Solution for Member Municipalities

In January of 2023, SCRCOG began work on preparing a grant application to offer a regional programmatic cybersecurity solution through OPM's Regional Performance Incentive Program (RPIP). SCRCOG's ongoing cybersecurity work across the past four years identified that many of the member municipalities were short of resources and staff to adequately address their cyber vulnerabilities. The burgeoning of remote work during and after the COVID-19 pandemic led to greater possibilities of unprotected endpoints in municipal cyber infrastructure. Utilizing collaborations among Novus, DEMHS, and the region's municipal IT directors, SCRCOG was able to develop a comprehensive and programmatic approach for the improvement of the SCRCOG municipalities' cybersecurity posture. The work to create this robust solution and subsequent grant application required multiple meetings between SCRCOG staff, Novus, OPM, CISA and DEMHS. The proposed program was also presented to the SCRCOG Board during a special meeting and received its full support. A resolution supporting the proposal and grant application was approved by the SCRCOG Board in March 2023.

After months of discussions with and within OPM, SCRCOG was officially awarded a \$2.2 million RPIP grant for this proposed project in September 2023. The RSG-funded cybersecurity work over the last four years laid the groundwork for creating such a unique regional approach to this persistent problem.

Workshop Series

SCRCOG hosted four information technology and cybersecurity workshops throughout the

2022-23 fiscal year. The workshops featured presentations on cyber insurance, cybersecurity policies and procedures, emerging threats and third-party software management best practices. Recordings of these meetings were made available to the SCRCOG municipalities and were distributed through the DEMHS Region 2 Coordinator.

MUNICIPAL GRANTS

SCRCOG launched a Municipal Grants Initiative for the region's municipalities in early 2022 and continued this initiative into the end of FY22-23. SCRCOG engaged a consultant team with extensive experience in grants application and administration. The consultants conducted and analyzed a needs assessment survey and created a series of workshops based on that feedback. The consultants were made available to the region's municipalities free of charge and in an on-call fashion, often meeting individually with members to offer analysis, helpful suggestions and edits on potential grant applications. The Grants team provided direct technical assistance and peer reviews of municipal grant applications. They also provided SCRCOG staff with a variety of relevant state and federal grant opportunities which were shared with the municipalities in the SCRCOG monthly newsletter. The consultants facilitated four workshops that provided training on grant preparedness, staffing needs, and best practices for completing applications.

PROCUREMENT

Capitol Region Purchasing Council (CRPC)

The Capitol Region Purchasing Council (CRPC) is a cooperative body of over 115 towns and other entities in Connecticut. It offers its members programs and services to save money,

time, and create efficiencies. SCRCOG pays for its municipalities to be members of CRPC.

In FY 2022-2023 eight SCRCOG municipalities participated in CRPC programs with over \$43,000 in bid savings. Additionally, over \$750,000 was spent by SCRCOG municipalities through CRPC's eZICQ construction program. Visit the [CRPC webpage](#) for more details and resources.

REGIONAL PURCHASING CONSORTIUM

This program was suspended during the FY 22-23 fiscal year, however SCROCG is committed to reactivating this program in the upcoming fiscal year.

SOLID WASTE, RECYCLING AND FOOD WASTE DIVERSION

SW&R Working Group Meetings

For the fifth year, SCRCOG convened and shared resources with the Solid Waste and Recycling (SW&R) Working Group. There were three Working Group meetings this year, which featured presentations on ongoing solid waste and recycling programs in the region, the Clynk bottle bag program, the curbside textiles program, deconstruction, developing food composting sites at existing municipal leaf composting facilities, composting using aerated static piles, and school food waste diversion.

In the areas of solid waste and recycling, SCRCOG fostered partnerships with CT DEEP, CCSMM, and Waste Zero.

Sustainable Materials Management Grant

CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) launched the Sustainable

Materials Management (SMM) Grant program in the fall of 2021. The grant makes available \$5 million in funding for unit-based pricing and food waste co-collection pilot programs, along with technical assistance programs to respond to the solid waste disposal crisis facing towns.

SCRCOG staff and consultants met with municipalities individually to promote the grant opportunity and to assist with the drafting of applications. Eight SCRCOG municipalities have submitted grant applications: Bethany, Branford, Guilford, Hamden, Madison, Meriden, West Haven, and Woodbridge. SCRCOG also submitted an application to provide regional coordination and support under resourced towns.

Regional Backyard Composting Sale

In April 2023, SCRCOG sponsored a second annual Regional Composter Sale in Woodbridge, Hamden, and Guilford. Over 80 composters, rain barrels, and other accessories were sold.



PRESENTATIONS TO SCRCOG BOARD

MONTH	SPEAKER	TOPIC
July 2022	William Villano, <i>President & CEO, Workforce Alliance</i>	
August 2022	Robert J. Devlin, Jr., <i>Inspector General</i> and James Viadaro, <i>Chief Inspector, Connecticut Office of Inspector General</i>	
September 2022	Kendra McQuilton, <i>CEO, Energia</i>	Energy Savings Performance Project
October 2022	<i>No Presentation</i>	
November 2022	Juliet Burdelski and Renata Bertotti, <i>SCRCOG Grant Consultants</i>	
December 2022	<i>No Presentation</i>	
January 2023	<i>No Presentation</i>	
February 2023	<i>No Presentation</i>	
March 2023	2023-2028 South Central Connecticut Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs)	
April 2023	<i>No Presentation</i>	
May 2023	Kelly Davila, <i>DataHaven</i>	2023 Greater New Haven Community Wellbeing Index
June 2023	<i>No Presentation</i>	



INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

SCRCOG hosted one regional planning and municipal services intern over the past year:

Heba Naqvi Master of Public Administration student at Interned: August 2022 – May 2023
 the University of Connecticut

This intern assisted with a variety of research, analysis, and graphic design projects, in addition to helping SCRCOG staff coordinate meetings and events.



SCRCOG PARTNERSHIPS

SCRCOG staff actively participate in the meetings and activities of several statewide and regional organizations. Executive Director Amento is a member of the Connecticut Councils of Government (CTCOG), and he represents SCRCOG on the Metropolitan Area Planning (MAP) Forum, a multi-state transportation planning organization. He is also a member of the Hartford Line Advisory Committee and was appointed to U.S. Senator Murphy’s Transportation Advisory Committee. He serves as Co-Chair of the DEMHS Region 2 ESF-14 Long-Term Recovery Plan Steering Committee. Executive Director Amento was appointed by the Speaker of the House to the Connecticut Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR). He is also an active member of the DEEP’s CT Coalition for Sustainable Materials Management (CCSMM). SCRCOG staff are involved in the Region 2 DEMHS Regional Emergency Preparedness Team (REPT) and Sustainable CT.



CONTACT INFORMATION

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