



Annual Report

For the fiscal year 2009-2010

Prepared by the Central Connecticut
Regional Planning Agency
12/1/2010

AGENCY MISSION

Carl Stephani, Executive Director

The Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency was organized in 1966 to provide a regional framework within which “To Plan and Promote Regional Policies and Programs to Enhance the Vitality, Accessibility, and Quality of life in our Communities.” To accomplish this mission, CCRPA provides paratransit services (for those with disabilities) to the Region, coordinates municipal land use planning and zoning, prepares transportation, economic development, environmental, and emergency services preparedness and response plans. Some of the functions we performed and projects we undertook during the 2009-2010 fiscal year are described below.

MPO FUNCTIONS

Francis Pickering, Senior Planner and Ethan Abeles, Transportation Planner

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region, CCRPA authored, and the Board adopted, a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for 2010-2013. The program includes all transportation projects in the region that receive Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds.¹

In addition to the adoption of the new TIP, during 2010-2013 Agency staff retooled the TIP as an electronic document to ease project tracking and give a better overview of project funding and progress. Agency staff will be soliciting new projects for the TIP in the near future as well as developing projects in-house to respond to and maximize the region’s funding under the various opportunities available (e.g., Transportation Enhancement, Transit Enhancement, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality).

During 2009-2010, CCRPA also released its Unified Planning Work Program for the next two fiscal years. This document, which was redone from the ground up, lays out

¹ *Non-federally funded projects (state and/or local funding) may appear in the TIP, but it is important to remember that they frequently will not. The TIP is a requirement of federal transportation law, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The TIP is required to be financially constrained, which means that there must be sufficient revenue to complete all of its projects. First year projects must have verified funding sources; the remaining years’ projects must have reasonably expected sources. It is therefore anticipated that funding will be available for the projects displayed in the TIP. Financial constraint is assured by ConnDOT in the process of creating its statewide program of projects. The majority of projects listed on the TIP is derived from the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The document is subject to change, and amendments to the TIP are common for a variety of reasons; such as project cancellation, cost increases or decreases, and rescheduling of project phases.*

the activities the Agency will undertake pursuant to its transportation planning grant from FHWA and FTA.

CCRPA is currently redoing the region's Long-Range Transportation Plan; this plan, which represents a significant update from the last plan (four years ago), projects a vision for transportation investments in the region for the next twenty-five years.

AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT

Francis Pickering, Senior Planner

Central Connecticut received approximately \$5.7 million in federal funds from the ARRA program designed to stimulate the economy by funding 'shovel-ready' infrastructure projects. The Transportation Improvement Committee (TIC) reviewed and selected projects from the region to receive ARRA funds. All of the projects now appear in the new TIP and are shown as obligating their funds in 2010.

MULTIMODAL PLANNING

Francis Pickering, Senior Planner

The Agency is currently working to complete the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail through the region, provide signage for the interim route of the East Coast Greenway, develop a regional multi-use (cyclist and pedestrian) network, and protect and develop the New England Trail, the newest of the country's eleven National Scenic Trails, as it passes through Berlin, Southington, New Britain, and Plainville. CCRPA is also investigating the possibility of building spurs to link the multi-use trail along the planned New Britain-Hartford Busway with Central Connecticut State University and Westfarms Mall.

CCRPA worked with Plymouth to put together a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) master plan for the Harry S. Fisher Elementary and Eli Terry Jr. Middle Schools. The Agency received \$14,000 from the Department of Transportation to assist the schools with their plan, which was a required element of the DOT's SRTS Infrastructure Program grant application. As part of the plan, the Agency held outreach events with town and school members. Agency staff also developed a GIS method for analyzing the 'walk-shed' of the two schools. A poster detailing this process and its result was displayed and awarded an "honorable mention" as part of CT GIS Day at the Legislative Office Building in November 2009. Based upon CCRPA's work, Plymouth's application for \$300,000 in SRTS funding to construct improvements was granted.

In addition to planning activities, CCRPA worked with the DOT to steer ARRA funds to worthy bicycle and pedestrian projects in the region, including extension of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail in Southington and the Farmington River Trail in Burlington. These projects are under construction.

TRANSIT SERVICES

John Tricarico, Transit Programs Manager

CT Transit's New Britain/Bristol division operates nine bus routes in Berlin, Bristol, Farmington, Meriden, Middletown, New Britain, Newington, and Plainville. Transfers are available to CT Transit's Hartford and Meriden/Wallingford divisions as well as Middletown Area Transit and Amtrak rail.

In 2009-2010, CCRPA worked to implement electronic trip routing and planning. These efforts have since been taken on by the DOT; CT Transit's Hartford division has gone live on Google Transit; the Bristol/New Britain division should go online shortly. The region also received new buses during this period.

At present, CCRPA is working to secure funding for and install signage, including route signs and system maps, at all bus time points (so-called 'stops') in the region. The Agency is also pursuing multimodal signage to link local buses with multi-use trails in and around the region.

ADA PARATRANSIT SERVICES

John Tricarico, Transit Programs Manager

The Agency administers the Region's paratransit service under a grant from the Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT). As required by Federal law, this subsidized service is offered to people who live within three-quarter miles of fixed-route transit (buses and trains), but who cannot ride the fixed-route service because of a disability. The Agency contracts with Dattco, Inc., of New Britain, to run the service.

In 2009-2010, CCRPA worked with DATTCO install trip booking and scheduling software; adoption of this software has considerably increased the efficiency of paratransit operations while allowing for enhanced service. CCRPA likewise modernized its in-house procedures to reduce administrative overhead while enhancing customer relations management. The Agency also installed a new phone system to augment call capacity and provide additional functionality, especially for paratransit callers.

In response to growing customer demand, CCRPA worked with Dattco to expand the paratransit vehicle fleet as well as the service area. Single-seat paratransit trips are now possible to selected locations within thirteen municipalities.

SECTION 5310 VAN REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

John Tricarico, Transit Programs Manager

The Agency solicits proposals from municipal and nonprofit providers of dial-a-ride services to fund a portion of the cost of vehicle replacements under a grant from the Federal Transit Administration on an annual basis. Funding during 2009-2010 was

sufficient to cover one application from the town of Berlin; during the same period, all six applicants (from five towns) who applied for future funding were approved.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Tim Malone, Regional Planner

To qualify for federal economic development assistance a municipality must be in a region with a federally approved Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) in effect. CCRPA has been awarded a \$64,000 by the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) to prepare a new five-year CEDS, which will include all seven CCRPA towns. The new CEDS, which CCRPA began work on during 2009-2010 and is underway, comprises goals, objectives, strategies, and specific projects that the region wishes to pursue to foster continued regional economic development.

LAND USE REFERRALS

Kristin Thomas, Regional Planner

The Agency's referral function is mandated by the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut. While Agency recommendations on these matters are non-binding, the review mandate is important procedurally as this process keeps the Region and neighboring municipalities aware of developments in the larger area and provides the opportunity for coordination. State statute requires referrals in three areas: zoning under Section 8-3b; subdivisions under Section 8-26b; and Plans of Conservation & Development under Section 8-23f. The Agency reviewed an average of nearly half a dozen such referrals each month this year.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND MITIGATION

Kristin Thomas, Regional Planner

The Agency continues to work with the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) via the Capitol Region Emergency Preparedness Planning Committee (CREPC) and the Region 5 Emergency Preparedness Team (R5EPT). CCRPA also works with regional and statewide Citizen Corps Councils and assists in the management and coordination of Citizen Emergency Response Teams (CERT).

In 2009-2010, CCRPA received \$2,000 to represent the town of Plymouth on the R5EPT and to assist in its programs, projects, events and activities. The R5EPT encourages collaboration and cooperation of all DEMHS Region 5's towns on matters of preparedness, communication, resource sharing, and emergency response.

The Agency receives \$8,000 each year from the Statewide Citizen Corps Council to form, train, coordinate, and maintain Citizens' Emergency Response (CERT) teams in the Region, including the existing CERTs in Southington, New Britain, and Bristol, in-

cluding a dormant team at ESPN. These teams of civilian volunteers provide support to emergency first responders in their own towns and across the state.

In 2009-2010, CCRPA completed and released a regional natural hazard mitigation plan. This plan, which drew on extensive stakeholder input, provides a framework for the region's municipalities to anticipate and take action against disasters before they strike. Approval of the plan, which is under review at FEMA, will enable the region's members to apply for federal funds to implement mitigatory measures.

BRISTOL BRASS DAM REMOVAL

Francis Pickering, Senior Planner

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection granted CCRPA \$100,000 to study the feasibility of removing of the Bristol Brass Dam. This dam, which lies on the Pequabuck River and no longer serves any purpose, interferes with the riverine environment and poses a barrier to the passage of numerous fish species. CCRPA, together with its consultant Princeton Hydro, has determined that dam removal is feasible and has identified removal as the preferred alternative. Drafts of the feasibility study and design plans for removal are available; release of the final version is scheduled for the end of 2010.

CCRPA was recently notified that it has been awarded a follow-up grant by the DEP to complete permitting for dam removal and undertake construction activities; grants for federal matching funds are pending.

FISCAL REPORT

Cheri Bouchard-Duquette, Office Manager/Bookkeeper

More than ninety percent of the services CCRPA provides are funded by Federal and State grants. Out of a total annual budget of more than \$2.0 million, the total local match budgeted for all seven of our member municipalities is \$88,000. That figure has not changed for more than a decade. During the 2009-2010 fiscal year, the \$88,000 local match enabled more than \$20 million of outside funds to flow to the Region's member municipalities for transportation and other projects. It is anticipated that similar amounts will be generated through CCRPA for our member municipalities annually in the years to come.

While there has been no change in the total amount of CCRPA budget supported by municipal dues, the proportion of the total \$88,000 paid by each of our seven member Towns varies annually in relation to changes in the population and total grand list value in each town.

REVENUES

State	\$670,264
ADA Paratransit Service	\$1,249,494
Member Municipalities	\$88,000
Municipalities (CRPC) Dues	\$3,500
Other	\$60,736
Total Revenues	\$2,071,994

EXPENDITURES

Direct Costs	
Salaries	\$245,090
ADA Paratransit Service	\$1,167,413
Other	\$310,048
Indirect Costs	\$301,648
Total Expenditures	\$2,024,199

PEOPLE

AGENCY BOARD MEMBERS

July 1, 2009-June 30, 2010



Back row, left to right: Don Padlo, Carl Johnson, Pete McBrien, Steven Schiller, Tim Furey, Craig Diangelo, Paul Bedard, Don Naples, Bart Bovee; Sitting left to right: Dennis Kern, Stephen Mindera, Jennifer Bartiss-Earley, John Pompei, Rudy Cabata; absent: Paul Rachielles, David Dudek, and Joseph Krajewski

Berlin Dennis Kern, Treasurer
 Bart Bovee

Bristol John Pompei, Vice Chair
 Donald Padlo
 Tim Furey

Burlington Paul Rachielles
 Peter McBrien

New Britain	Donald Naples, Secretary Craig Diangelo Steven Schiller
Plainville	David Dudek, Chair Jennifer Bartiss-Earley
Plymouth	Carl Johnson Stephen Mindera
Southington	Joseph Krajewski Rudy Cabata Paul Bedard

CCRPA STAFF

July 1, 2009-June 30, 2010

Carl J. Stephani, ICMA-CM	Executive Director
Cheri Bouchard-Duquette	Office Manager/Bookkeeper
John Tricarico	Transportation Assistant
Francis Pickering	Regional Planner
Melon Wedick	Regional Planner
Ethan Abeles	Transportation Planner

CONTACT

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