



Annual Report

Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency

2010-2012

Agency Mission

Carl Stephani, Executive Director

The Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency was founded 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 coordinates municipal land use planning and zoning, prepares transportation, economic development, environmental, and emergency preparedness and response plans, and offers paratransit services in the Region for those with disabilities. Some of the functions we performed and projects we undertook during the 2010-2012 fiscal years are described below.

Transportation planning and programming

All Staff

As the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region, CCRPA is the channel through which municipalities apply for and access federal transportation funds. CCRPA is responsible for solicitation, review, and submission of funding applications under a variety of programs. These include:

- Surface Transportation Program (Urban) – CCRPA manages a funding program of \$ 2.5-3 million annually for improvements to the region’s transportation system.
- Transportation Alternatives (formerly Enhancements) – \$250,000 annually for specific types of projects, including pedestrian/cyclist facilities and environmental mitigation and remediation.
- Congestion Management and Air Quality (CMAQ) – CCRPA acts as a state liaison for projects improving traffic flow and air quality; statewide annual funding is generally several millions dollars.

For all of these programs, CCRPA is responsible for the solicitation, review, evaluation, and submission of projects to the state and programming for their funding. Under the enhancement and CMAQ programs, CCRPA developed projects in-house and provided technical assistance on projects submitted to it, including estimation of congestion and air quality impacts for CMAQ projects. CCRPA also undertakes a variety of special projects, coordinates with outside agencies, and provides technical assistance to member municipalities. The products of CCRPA’s transportation planning work are described below.

MPO functions

Francis Pickering, Deputy Director

Jason Zheng, Assistant Planner

As the MPO for Central Connecticut, CCRPA is responsible for transportation planning and programming in the region. The basis documents, which are federally mandated, include the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). CCRPA is also responsible for ensuring that these documents, and the actions taken to implement them, comply with Title VI requirements.

LRTP

The LRTP lays out a broad vision of the form and functions of the region’s transportation system. The plan looks toward the future but is

flexible to adapt to changes in the region's needs. The plan is developed in collaboration with the Connecticut Department of Transportation, the Agency Board and its committees, CCRPA's municipalities, and the public. The 2011-2040 LRTP was adopted by the Agency Board on May 5, 2011 and last amended on February 2, 2012.

TIP

The TIP lays how federal transportation funds will be allocated in the region. It includes all transportation projects in the region that receive funds from the U.S. Department of Transportation and its subagencies, including the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Non-federally funded projects (state and/or local funding) may appear in the TIP. The latest TIP for 2012-2015 was adopted by the Agency Board on February 2nd, 2012 and last amended on December 6th, 2012.

UPWP

The UPWP lists the tasks necessary to carry out the objectives of the LRTP and the transportation planning process. The UPWP is updated every two years. The latest UPWP was released on April 1, 2012 and is for federal fiscal years 2013 and 2014.

Title VI review

In response to a state review for compliance with federal guidelines, CCRPA developed and enhanced its Title VI (anti-discrimination) process. Notable changes include an update to the complaint form, the official complaint process, and methods for handling discrimination under protected classes. The Agency is involved with the University of Connecticut's t-HUB program, which will enhance Title VI, Limited English Proficiency, and Environmental Justice reporting capabilities.

Congestion Management Process

Jason Zheng, Assistant Planner

Ethan Abeles, Transportation Planner (former)

Patrick Gallagher, Planning Aide (former)

The Congestion Management Process (CMP) is a federal requirement to assess regional congestion and support other regional planning documents such as the LRTP and TIP. As part of the CMP, staff collect data on traffic speeds and delay throughout the region. The CMP concludes with a report, which provides an overview of transportation system performance and identifies opportunities in the region. The CMP was completed in May, 2012.

Safe Routes to School

Abigail St. Peter, Assistant Planner

Kristin Thomas, Associate Planner

Safe Routes to School is an initiative to promote walking and bicycling to school by making it safe, convenient, and fun for children to do so. Following on earlier success in Terryville, CCRPA worked closely with the Safe Routes to School Committees in both Plainville and Southington to develop master plans to increase walking and biking for students at Toffolon Elementary School and Middle School of Plainville and for students at DePaolo Middle School in Southington. The master plans identified deficiencies in the school surroundings that make it difficult for children to safely walk and bike to school and proposed recommendations to address the deficiencies. As a result of these findings, with assistance from the Agency, the Committees decided to apply for funds for infrastructure improvements from the Safe Routes to School Program administered by the Connecticut Department of Transportation. The Safe Routes to School projects for Plainville and Southington were awarded a combined \$955,800 for improvements.

CCSU Transportation Demand Management Plan

Timothy Malone, Associate Planner

Ryan Ensling, Planning Aide

Kristin Hadjstylianos, Planning Aide

CCRPA has partnered with Central Connecticut State University to develop a transportation demand management plan for the university. This plan will analyze the transportation options available to students, staff, and faculty, project transportation trends, and propose strategies that will encourage the use of non-single-occupancy vehicles. The plan will focus on making the university more accessible by walking, cycling, and public transit. Work on this plan will proceed throughout the 2012/2013 school year.

Forestville project

Kristin Thomas, Associate Planner

Jason Zheng, Assistant Planner

The Forestville Project is a community-based design plan to revitalize Forestville center, a historic village in Bristol. The project is a collaborative effort between CCRPA and the Community Research Design Collaborative (CRDC), which is based in the University of Connecticut's Department of Landscape Architecture. The CRDC works with citizens, landowners, public officials, and municipalities to incorporate emerging policies and techniques for sustainable development into community planning and design. The project team also receives technical support from Bristol and the University of Connecticut's Department of

Civil Engineering. The project was initiated in June 2011 and is scheduled for completion in 2013.

This project outlines a vision for the future of Forestville and addresses issues related to transportation, economic development, and environmental management within the existing village context. As a community-based design, public involvement is a critical component of the project. Outreach efforts included nearly a dozen committed working group sessions and large public engagement sessions. These efforts ensured broad public input on the scope, data collection, analysis, and design of the project. A major focus will be traffic circulation around the intersection of Central St and East Main St. Ultimately, the project will produce a land use plan which builds on the Route 72 Corridor Study. The plan will be designed to allow its adoption as an amendment to Bristol's Plan of Conservation and Development.

Burlington-Farmington Scenic Roads

Timothy Malone, Associate Planner

Kristin Thomas, Associate Planner

CCRPA completed and submitted an application for two state Scenic Road designations in Burlington and Farmington. If approved by the Department of Transportation, portions of Routes 69, 179, and 4 will be recognized for their extraordinary beauty and recreational opportunities. The stretch of Route 69 that was nominated extends from the Sessions Woods Wildlife Management Area to the E.R. Hinman and Sons sawmill. The road features a dense tree canopy, a historic cemetery, and access to the Tunxis Trail. The sections of Routes 179 and 4 that are proposed for designation start at the terminus of an existing Scenic Road in Canton and extend to the Route 4 Bridge in Farmington. This route follows the Farmington River; as such it features access to the river and to the multi-use Farmington Canal Heritage Trail. Designation will bring much deserved recognition to these roads and help the town preserve them for future generations. A meeting with the Scenic Roads Advisory Committee will be scheduled soon to finalize this designation.

Southington Center Street Study

Timothy Malone, Associate Planner

Jason Zheng, Assistant Planner

CCRPA conducted a traffic study and provided recommendations for Center Street, the principal business street in Southington's downtown. The Agency identified and presented options to calm traffic and make the street a more inviting to pedestrians. CCRPA recommended that the town continue to the study the issue and engage business

leaders and other stakeholders to develop a plan. CCRPA has also offered assistance to the town to see this project through.

Traffic counts

Jason Zheng, Assistant Planner

Timothy Malone, Associate Planner

Greg Martin, Paratransit Coordinator/Emergency Planner

Ethan Abeles, Transportation Planner (former)

Patrick Gallagher, Planning Aide (former)

CCRPA collects and analyzes traffic data on behalf of its members. Staff routinely conduct counts of pedestrians/hikers, cyclists/mountain bikers, ATV/OHV users, bus riders, and vehicles including volume, type, and speed. CCRPA also collects data of turning movement at intersections and parking lot utilizations, as well as demographic and socioeconomic information. For 2011 and 2012, CCRPA conducted pedestrian/bicyclist counts at 12 locations and traffic counts at 16 locations. Notable pedestrian/cyclist counts took place on different segments of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail and New England Trail. Our counts suggest that there are over 100,000 unique users annually. Notable vehicle counts took place for CCRPA projects (the Forestville Project, the CCSU Travel Demand Management Plan, among others) and for municipal studies (e.g.; Bristol downtown, Southington downtown, Plainville intersection study, et al.)

Technical assistance

Timothy Malone, Associate Planner

Jason Zheng, Assistant Planner

Patrick Gallagher, Planning Aide (former)

West Broad St.

CCRPA completed a study of the West Broad Street neighborhood on the Bristol/Plainville town line. The study examines traffic patterns and the potential for the use of traffic calming measures in response to concerns.

Roundabout Study

CCRPA completed a roundabout study of the intersections of Washington, Camp, and Bradley Streets in Bristol and Plainville, an area of high traffic congestion. The study examined the potential for the installation of roundabouts at these locations to alleviate congestion and improve safety.

Plainville School Buses

At the request of the town of Plainville, CCRPA evaluated the efficiency of their public school bus routes.

CT FASTRAK

Francis Pickering, Deputy Director

CCRPA has coordinated with the Capitol Region Council of Governments and the state on securing funding for CTFAstrak (formerly the New Britain-Hartford Busway), submission of supportive grant applications, and providing input on the design of the project, including pedestrian and cyclist links to the stations and adjustments to bus routes.

New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Rail and Central Connecticut Rail Study

Francis Pickering, Deputy Director

CCRPA submitted supportive grant applications and reviewed the environmental assessment. The Agency also helped develop the scope for the Central Connecticut Rail study, met with the consultants of the project, provided them with input as well as data.

ADA Paratransit Service

Greg Martin, Paratransit Coordinator/Emergency Planner
Abigail St. Peter, Assistant Planner

The Agency coordinates the Region's paratransit service under contract with the Connecticut Department of Transportation. As required by Federal law, this service is offered to people who live within three-quarter miles of fixed-route transit (CT TRANSIT bus route) but cannot ride the fixed-route service because of a disability. The Agency currently contracts with DATTCO, Inc., of New Britain, to run the service.

In response to growing interest in the service, CCRPA developed a website for the paratransit service. The website provides information about the application process and allows applicants to submit applications by e-mail. Visitors to the site can also download a newly created Rider and Provider Handbook, which outlines policies and procedures of the service, and use an interactive map of the service region to determine if a particular address is served by paratransit. The website has enhanced customer relations and will continue to be updated as needed to keep all clients informed.

State Matching Grant Program

Abigail St. Peter, Assistant Planner

The State Matching Grant Program apportions funds to municipalities for the provision of transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities. The funds are available to any municipality and are apportioned based on the formula in the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) 13b-38bb. The Agency solicits applications and each municipality must apply through the Agency for funds. For the most recent fiscal year, the Region was allocated \$249,900.

Municipal van programs

Abigail St. Peter, Assistant Planner

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 grants from the Federal Transit Administration and the state. During 2010-2011, all applicants (representing three municipalities) for the Section 5310 program were awarded funding. The following year, both applicants who applied for funding were approved.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Timothy Malone, Associate Planner

CCRPA creates and maintains a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the region. The CEDS analyzes economic conditions in the region and proposes strategies to overcome regional weaknesses and build on regional strengths. The United States Economic Development Administration (EDA) requires that municipalities be a member of a CEDS region and have an up-to-date CEDS to be eligible for grants under the Public Works and Economic Development and the Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. These programs have funded over \$3 million of infrastructure in the region's industrial parks. In September 2011, CCRPA completed a five-year update of the CEDS, which was granted EDA approval in January 2012. Approvals by the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development and the Office of Policy and Management in April and May were announced in April and May, respectively.

Economic Development District

Timothy Malone, Associate Planner

Following on CCRPA's successful CEDS update, the region will be applying for designation as an Economic Development District (EDD). EDDs are entities recognized and funded by the U.S. EDA that manage a region's economic development strategy, develop economic development projects, and coordinate economic development activities. EDD designation will provide the region with greater flexibility in implementing its economic development strategy. CCRPA has applied for state and federal designation. To date, state designation has been granted, and federal designation is pending (it is currently undergoing review by EDA's regional office).

Emergency Preparedness and Planning

Greg Martin, Paratransit Coordinator/Emergency Planner

The Agency continues its involvement with the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security through participation in Region 5 Emergency Preparedness Team (R5EPT) and the Statewide Citizen Corps Council, as well as management and coordination of Citizen Emergency Response Teams (CERT).

CCRPA represents Plymouth on R5EPT and assist in its programs, projects, events, and activities. R5EPT encourages collaboration and cooperation of Region 5 members on preparedness, interoperable communication, resource sharing, and emergency response.

The Agency acts on behalf of the Statewide Citizen Corps Council to form, train, coordinate, and maintain CERT teams in the Region. Active teams currently exist in Bristol, Burlington, New Britain, and Southington, with an additional team resident at ESPN. These teams of civilian volunteers provide support to first responders on the scenes of emergencies in their own communities and across the state.

Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan

Greg Martin, Paratransit Coordinator/Emergency Planner

Using a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), CCRPA completed its Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2011. The purpose of this plan is to assess hazard risks at the regional and local levels, review existing mitigation strategies, and recommend additional strategies that can help to reduce economic disruption, loss of life, and destruction of property resulting from natural disasters. By completing and updating this plan, towns in the Region are eligible for the following FEMA grant programs (administered by DEEP):

- Pre-Disaster Mitigation
- Flood Mitigation Assistance
- Severe Repetitive Loss
- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

Planning and zoning referrals

Kristin Thomas, Associate Planner

Timothy Malone, Associate Planner

As required by Sections 8-3b, 8-26b, and 8-23(g)(4) of the Connecticut General Statutes, CCRPA provides advisory review of zoning referrals that affect land within 500 feet of one of their seven municipalities. These referrals include zoning regulation amendments, zone map changes, subdivision regulation amendments, and updates to municipal plans of conservation and development. CCRPA staff evaluates the referral for potential land use conflicts in light of the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). Staff addresses potential inter-municipal and regional impacts created by the proposal, such as traffic, density, environmental impacts, and economic development issues. A final determination of whether the change is in conflict with the POCD is made by the Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC).

Other Planning and Services

In addition to these documents, CCRPA produces other plans and studies for the region. CCRPA manages or coordinates several projects and grants for the region, including the Bristol Brass Dam Removal, the Farmers Market Promotion Program Grant, the Plymouth Reservoir project, the New Britain Urban Tree Canopy Study, and the Community and Natural Resource Planning Program.

CCRPA staff represent the region in a variety of forums. These include the Central Connecticut Economic Development Alliance, the Hartford-Springfield Economic Partnership, Capital Workforce Partners, the Capitol Region Emergency Planning Committee, the Region 5 Emergency Preparedness Team, the Regional Brownfields Partnership, the CCSU President's Advisory Committee on Environment Sustainability, the Environmental Review Team, King's Mark Resource Conservation and Development Project, the New England National Scenic Trail Stewardship Council, the Connecticut Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board, and the Connecticut Association of Regional Planning Organizations, in addition to local chambers of commerce, land trusts, and watershed associations.

Farmers Market Promotion Program Grant

Timothy Malone, Associate Planner

CCRPA was awarded a grant by the United States Department of Agriculture to promote farmers markets in the region. The Agency will work with Urban Oaks in New Britain to develop a mobile farmers market. In partnership with Urban Oaks, CCRPA will purchase a refrigerated truck, shelving, advertising materials, and a refrigeration unit to increase food storage and delivery capacity. The mobile market will focus on clusters of transportation-limited populations such as residents of assisted living facilities and low-income families. The grant will also help Urban Oaks better serve the population in its surrounding neighborhood. Increased capacity at Urban Oaks will also allow them to increase the number of farmers they buy produce from.

Bristol Brass Dam Removal

Francis Pickering, Deputy Director

Amanda Ryan, Planning Aide

The Bristol Brass Dam is located on the Pequabuck River at the intersections of Routes 72 and 229. No longer serving any purpose, the dam poses a full barrier to fish passage and interferes with the natural hydrology of the river. Removal of the dam will open an additional 8.5 stream-miles up to fish, enhancing the river's ecosystem and providing opportunities for anglers on Veterans Memorial Park and an adjacent,

planned City park. Project plans have been extensively reviewed by ConnDOT and are undergoing a final revision by Princeton Hydro. Staff will attend a permitting pre-application meeting with regulators in the near future; submission of permits is expected in 2013. The Agency is seeking funds to complete the project.

Plymouth Reservoir

Francis Pickering, Deputy Director

CCRPA applied for and secured an \$800,000 grant to make up the funding shortfall necessary to acquire the Plymouth Reservoir, a 177-acre property that the town had wished to protect as open space. As part of the project, the Plymouth Reservoir will be connected to the Thomaston Dam. Staff expect to begin work on this connection in 2013.

Community and Natural Resource Planning Program

Francis Pickering, Deputy Director

Timothy Malone, Associate Planner

CCRPA brought the Community and Natural Resource Planning Program (formerly the Green Valley Institute) to the region in fall 2011 for a series of no/low-cost training seminars and workshops on municipal planning and finances. Topics offered included Development Alternatives, Economics of Land Use, Low Impact Development, and Growth and Community Character.

New Britain Urban Tree Canopy Study

Jessica Haerter

CCRPA will assess the urban tree canopy in New Britain and develop an implementation plan to enhance and expand it. The project's objectives are to measure the City's existing tree canopy, describe future canopy scenarios and select a desired one, quantify the benefits of the existing and desired future canopy (i.e., the ecosystem services they provide), and develop strategies, actions, and projects to realize the desired scenario. The goal of the project is to provide a plan for the City and CCRPA to follow, and a template for others to learn from, that will significantly increase tree cover and decrease air pollution, water pollution, and the urban heat island effect in the City in the mid-term. (In addition to adding green infrastructure, Implementation of the plan also stands to expand wildlife habitat, save energy, shore up property values, and bolster economic development.)

Legislative and statewide initiatives

From time to time CCRPA proposes legislation that benefits the region. CCRPA has successfully advanced legislation that allows municipalities

to send zoning referrals by e-mail instead of certified mail saving time and money. During the coming session CCRPA anticipates proposing legislation that will allow for e-mail delivery of subdivision referrals as well as empower municipalities to accept payments in lieu of sidewalks from developers.

CCRPA coordinated with its member municipalities on the new Connecticut State Plan of Conservation and Development. Staff reviewed the draft plan and provided extensive comments to the state.

Brownfields

Francis Pickering, Deputy Director

CCRPA represents the region at the Regional Brownfields Partnership and provides municipal officials information on opportunities for redevelopment, including state and federal grants for the assessment and remediation of brownfields.

Sustainable Knowledge Corridor

Carl Stephanie, Executive Director

Francis Pickering, Deputy Director

CCRPA is working with the Capitol Region Council of Governments and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission on the Sustainable Knowledge Corridor. Jointly sponsored by the U.S. Department of Transportation, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Environmental Protection Agency, this \$4.2 million Sustainable Communities Initiative project seeks to advance sustainability and livability in the Hartford and Springfield metro Areas. CCRPA is updating its regional Plan of Conservation and Development as a part of this project.

Bristol Downtown Development

CCRPA has coordinated with Renaissance Downtowns on the Depot Square project including providing traffic counts, assisting in the development of city-wide bicycle routes, and discussing changes to the road network as well as transit routes.

Information systems

Francis Pickering, Deputy Director

CCRPA overhauled its internal systems, including replacement of its server, network equipment, and telephone system, to enhance the Agency's technical capabilities and better customer service. CCRPA also developed an Android smartphone/tablet application to expedite data collection.

Funding achievements

Municipality	Source	Program	Project	Award
Bristol	DEEP	(various)	Removal of Bristol Brass Dam	\$264,500
Burlington	CTDOT	ARRA/TE	Farmington River Trail extension	\$249,219
New Britain	FHWA	TCSP	Complete streets	\$1,304,000
New Britain	OPM	TOD	Busway-associated downtown redevelopment	\$750,000
New Britain	DEEP	ATB	Air pollution remediation via enhancement to urban tree canopy	\$8,000
New Britain	USDA	FMPP	Equipment upgrades for an urban farm and a mobile food market	\$70,553
Plainville	CTDOT	SRTS	Sidewalks/other improvements near Toffolon/Middle Schools	\$457,305
Plymouth	CTDOT	SRTS	Sidewalks/other improvements near Fisher/Terry Schools	\$423,300
Plymouth	CTDOT	CMAQ	Hybrid vehicles	\$86,524
Plymouth	FHWA	PLHD	Acquisition and preservation of Plymouth Reservoir as open space	\$800,000
Southington	CTDOT	ARRA/TE	Farmington Canal Heritage Trail extension to Cheshire	\$3,350,000
Southington	CTDOT	SRTS	Sidewalks/other improvements near DePaolo School	\$498,496
Region	OPM	RPI	Regional parcel mapping and portal	\$149,340
Region	EDA	PWEAA	Regional disaster recovery/resiliency plan	\$170,714
Region	FTA	5307 (TrEn)	Bus stop and intermodal trail signage	\$24,140
Region	FTA	5310	Disabled and elderly transportation	\$354,826
Region	ERT	NRPA	Educational workshop series for municipalities	\$25,000
Region	HUD/ DOT/ EPA	SCI	Sustainable Communities Initiative partnership with CRCOG/PVPC	\$100,000
Total				\$9,085,917

Fiscal Report

Cheri Bouchard-Duquette, Office and Financial Administrator

More than ninety percent of the services the CCRPA provides are funded by Federal and State grants. Out of a total annual budget of more than \$2.3 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 last two fiscal years, the local match enabled almost \$9 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 the CCRPA for our member municipalities annually in the years to come.

While there has been no change in the total amount of the 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	\$458,015
ADA Paratransit	\$1,745,403
Member Municipalities	\$88,000
Municipalities (CRPC) Dues	\$3,500
Municipalities (CEDS) Dues	\$10,000
Other	\$60,736
Total Revenues	\$2,334,598

Expenditures

Direct Costs:

Salaries	\$330,797
ADA Paratransit Service	\$1,607,249
Other	\$61,868
Indirect Costs	\$333,384
Total Expenditures	\$2,333,298

People

Agency Board members



Berlin	Dennis Kern, Vice Chair Bart Bovee
Bristol	John Pompei, Chair Donald Padlo Rosie O'Brien Vojtek
Burlington	Paul Rachielles Peter McBrien
New Britain	Donald Naples, Secretary Marie Lausch Steven Schiller
Plainville	James Cassidy Jennifer Bartiss-Earley
Plymouth	Carl Johnson Stephen Mindera
Southington	John Barry Rudy Cabata, Treasurer Rusty Haigh

Staff

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Timothy Malone	Associate Planner
Kristin Thomas	Associate Planner
Abigail St. Pete	Assistant Planner
Jason Zheng	Assistant Planner
Greg Martin	Paratransit Coordinator/ Emergency Planner
Jessica Haerter	Planning Aide
Amanda Ryan	Planning Aide
Ryan Ensling	Planning Aide
Kristin Hadjstylianos	Planning Aide

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