

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

Member Municipalities:

- Bozrah
- Colchester
- East Lyme
- Franklin
- Griswold
- City of Groton
- Town of Groton
- Ledyard
- Lisbon
- Montville
- New London
- North Stonington
- Norwich
- Preston
- Salem
- Sprague
- Stonington
- Borough of Stonington
- Voluntown
- Waterford



INTRODUCTION

The Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments was formed in the fall of 1992. The Council succeeded its predecessor agency, The Southeastern Connecticut Regional Planning Agency (SCRPA), which had been in its existence since 1961. It was created through the adoption of membership ordinances by the towns, cities, and boroughs within the Southeastern Connecticut Planning Region. The Council is a governmental agency, formed and operating under the provisions of Sections 4-124i through 4-124p of the Connecticut General Statutes.

The Council's mission is to provide a basis for inter-

governmental cooperation for a wide range of issues facing southeastern Connecticut.

This annual report reviews activities of the Council during calendar year 2008 and provides financial information on the fiscal year ending 30 June 2008.

For the latest news and information about SCCOG's programs, projects, meeting agendas & minutes, publications, newsletters and links to its member towns, visit us on the web at www.seccog.org.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The policy board of the SCCOG consists of the municipal chief elected officials from the twenty member municipalities. Additionally, the Regional Planning Commission, which functions as a sub-unit of the Council, is composed of one representative from the planning commission of each member municipality. As authorized by statutes, some municipalities also have appointed alternates to the Council and Commission. The Council has amended its bylaws to provide for the participation on a non-voting basis of liaison representatives from the Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan Tribes, Submarine Group Two/Naval Region Northeast, and the Coast Guard Academy.

In addition to the Regional Planning Commission, the Council has formed several standing committees and, as needed, may form ad hoc committees. A staff of nine supports the work of the Council, its committees, and the Planning Commission. In December, 2008, the staff consisted of an executive director, an assistant director, three planners, the director of the Southeastern Connecticut Housing Alliance, an executive secretary and a GIS coordinator.

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

TRANSPORTATION:

The Council is the state-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for purposes of carrying out the regional transportation system planning and programming required under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

During this past year, staff continues to update the Regional Transportation Plan for FY 2007-2035. The latest Regional Transportation Plan addresses a variety of new issues required by SAFETEA-LU, as well as previously identified needs such as Route 11, I-95, and regional transit improvements.

During the year, Dennis Popp, Mayor of the City of

Groton, represented the Southeast Corridor TIA on the statewide Transportation Strategy Board (TSB).

The Council also continued to support major projects being conducted by ConnDOT. These included the Environmental Impact Statement for the extension of Route 11, completed in October, 2007; transportation system improvements in the Routes 2, 2A, and 32 corridors; and the installation of an Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) for I-95 and I-395 in southeastern Connecticut. Staff is also participating in the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement for improvements planned for I-95.

SCCOG MEMBERS:

Bozrah:

William Ballinger

Colchester:

Linda Hodge

East Lyme:

Paul Formica

Franklin:

Richard Matters, Treasurer

Griswold:

Philip Anthony, Jr.

City of Groton:

Dennis Popp

Town of Groton:

Harry Watson

Mark Oefinger, Town Mgr.

Ledyard:

Fred Allyn, Jr.

Lisbon:

Thomas Sparkman, V. Chair

Montville:

Joseph Jaskiewicz, Chairman

New London:

Kevin Cavanagh

Martin Berliner, City Mgr.

North Stonington:

Nicholas Mullane

Norwich:

Benjamin Lathrop

Alan Bergren, City Manager

Preston:

Robert Congdon

Salem:

Robert Ross

Sprague:

Catherine Osten

Stonington:

Ed Haberek, Jr.

Borough of Stonington:

Donald Maranell

Voluntown:

Gilbert Grimm

Waterford:

Daniel Steward

AFFILIATE
MEMBERS:**Mashantucket Pequot Tribe:**

Michael Thomas, Chairman

William Satti, Dir. Public
Affairs**Mohegan Tribe:**

Bruce Bozsum, Chairman

Chuck Bunnell, Chief of
Staff**U.S. Naval Submarine Base**

CAPT Mark Ginda

U.S. Coast Guard Academy

RADM J. Scott Burhoe

LTCDR Camilla Bosanquet

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS, CONTINUED

The Council is a member of and provides staff assistance to the Route 11 Greenway Authority Commission. This commission, created by state statute, is charged with establishing standards for the development of a greenway which is integral to the Route 11 project. The Commission met monthly during the past year. The Commission, in October 2006, acquired its first property, located in Salem. Additional parcels in Waterford, Montville and East Lyme have since been acquired. During 2008, the mission of the Greenway Authority Commission shifted toward constructing a bike/pedestrian facility. SCCOG initiated a STIP/TIP project for \$150,000 to support this effort.

This past year, SCCOG supported the effort of the towns of Preston, Ledyard, Groton and the City of Groton in creating a multi-purpose trail connecting Bluff Point State Park in Groton with Green Memorial Park in Preston.

Council staff provides continuing planning support to the Southeast Area Transit (SEAT) and to the Eastern Connecticut Transportation Consortium (ECTC).

Council staff continued to assist the Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board in managing the Jobs Access and Reverse Commute Program, a multi-region system for providing transportation to individuals on welfare that are seeking jobs, job training, and day care services for their children. During FY 2008, 314,902 trips were supported by this system, up from 241,029 in FY 2007.

Staff oversaw the development of a Locally Coordinated Health and Social Services Plan (LOCHSTP) which brings together the JARC, 5310 and New Freedoms Federal Transportation Programs.

During this calendar year, SCCOG staff has been continuing to work with the Norwich Clean Cities Coalition. This effort is based on a \$2.2 million Congressional appropriation for an Alternative Fuels-Bus Rapid Transit project that will be operated by SouthEast Area Transit. The project will provide funds for the acquisition of up to two new experimental buses that will be put into SEAT service to support the Intermodal Transit project championed by SCCOG.

The Council maintains and regularly updates a variety of information and statistics related to the region's transportation system. SCCOG staff maintains a regional Geographic Information System (GIS). In 2008, SCCOG initiated the creation of a web-based GIS for the region, using a Regional Performance Incentive Program grant from OPM in

the amount of \$287,430.

An application that SCCOG co-submitted with the City of New London for \$1.1 million in SAFETEA-LU Enhancement funds is being applied to the New London Parade project, with an emphasis on creating safer and better connections between the transportation services in the vicinity of Union Station. This project is now underway.

In August, SCCOG initiated a \$750,000 ConnDOT funded study of the Union Station/Regional Intermodal Transportation Center in New London. This study is being managed by SCCOG and should be completed in mid-2009. The study will result in a plan to improve both the physical and operational connections between the various modes of transportation.

This past year SCCOG entered into a contract with ConnDOT to conduct a Safe Routes to School Study in the region.

In November, SCCOG staff began participating on the advisory committee for the updating of the Groton-New London Airport Master Plan. The current plan was developed in 1998. The plan will consist of four working papers that will take approximately eight months to be completed. These papers will be combined with recommended and approved changes to form the draft Master Plan, which will be reviewed and developed into the final report and airport layout plan.

REGIONAL PLANNING:

The 2002 SCCOG Housing analysis led to the creation of the Blue Ribbon Housing Initiatives Panel (BRHIP). The stated mission of this organization was to "drive the creation of a diversified housing stock in southeastern Connecticut to meet the ever-changing demands of the region." The BRHIP became the Southeastern Connecticut Housing Alliance (SECHA) in 2006, and a full-time staff person was hired to assist the SECHA board in carrying out its work. In 2007, SCCOG and SECHA entered into a Memorandum of Agreement, and, since that time, this staff person has been a SCCOG employee, demonstrating SCCOG's commitment to seeing more affordable housing built in the region. SECHA endeavors to work with the region's municipalities to enable creation of both multi-family and single-family affordable housing stock.

SCCOG continued its emergency management planning efforts during the year as a participant in the DEMHS Region 4 emergency management process. Working under a Memorandum of Understanding between SCCOG, NECCOG and WINCOG, and

using funding from a FY 2007 Homeland Security grant, a three-COG region Regional Emergency Planning Team (REPT), chaired by Lisbon First Selectman Thomas Sparkman, adopted a spending plan for projects totaling \$917,033 in federal emergency management funding for eastern Connecticut. The Spending Plan was based on a SWOT Analysis which determined the three COG region's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats for emergency management. The SWOT Analysis was prepared by Region's 4 emergency providers working together on committees called Regional Emergency Support Functions (RESFs). In addition, this past year an inventory of emergency management equipment was prepared for Region 4 and a draft Regional Emergency Operations Plan was prepared and adopted for transmittal to DEMHS Commissioner James Thomas.

A \$22,000 Justice Assistance Grant for Local Law Enforcement (JAGLLE) was applied for and received by SCCOG on behalf of the Police Departments of the City of Groton, Groton Long Point, Town of Stonington and Waterford. The funds were used to purchase a Segway for the City of Groton, and Kawasaki Mule 4x4s for the other three departments.

During the year a joint committee of SCCOG and the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority began to meet to discuss how to improve the region's water system.

SCCOG staff completed a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP), also referred to as emergency dispatch center, consolidation study which examined the feasibility and actions required to consolidate the emergency dispatch centers in East Lyme, Montville, New London and Waterford. While not intended to provide any technological or engineering analysis, the study summarizes the major benefits and concerns related to consolidation. It provides an assessment of present emergency dispatch center operations, including call activity, and reviews possible consolidation scenarios. The estimated costs of these possible consolidation scenarios are also compared. The study discusses possible organization and governance approaches and outlines a financial plan. The study further recommends the next steps needed to implement a consolidation.

During 2008, SCCOG staff participated on the Advisory Committee for the regional drinking water quality management plan (DWQMP) developed in coordination with Groton Utilities and the Towns of Groton, Ledyard, Preston, North Stonington, Montville and Waterford. The vision of the plan is to achieve long-term preservation of safe and sustainable drinking water supplies through proactive water quality management in the current and future potential public water supply watersheds utilized by Groton Utilities.

In November, SCCOG staff began participating in the 2010 Participant Statistical Areas Program (PSAP) of the U.S. Census Bureau. Following Census Bureau guidelines, staff will review and, in consultation with local officials, suggest modifications to the geographic

boundaries for census tracts, block groups, and census designated places for reporting data from the 2010 census. The American Community Survey and other Census Bureau programs may also report data for these statistical areas following the 2010 Census.

The Council's Regional Planning Commission Reference Committee reviewed 68 referrals (through November 17th) for member municipalities during the year.

OTHER SCCOG ACTIVITIES:

SCCOG continued to participate in the activities of the Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board (ECWIB). The ECWIB is governed by a 35-member Board of Directors appointed by member towns' chief elected officials and oversees a network of workforce related programs and agencies.

SCCOG worked closely throughout 2008 with the region's legislative delegation. The repair of the States tax system, funding for education and funding from the Mashantucket Pequot Fund were the most important issues discussed.

SCCOG members and staff participated actively on the boards and commissions of the region's key economic development organizations including seCter, the Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board, and the Eastern CT Convention and Visitors Bureau. These inter-agency links are critical to developing a consistent regional position on major economic development issues and programs.

In 2008, an addition to the SCCOG office parking lot and drainage improvements were completed.

In 2008, the SCCOG initiated a three-part study intended to develop information useful to its member municipalities. The first part of the project was a compilation of the various non-tax revenue collected by southeastern Connecticut towns, ranging from fees charged for subdivision applications and other land use permits to those levied for GIS maps and service. The second part of the project was to ascertain SCCOG member municipalities' desire for and capacity to offer shared services. Both of these studies are available for review at the SCCOG office. The third part of the project is to re-study the potential for joint purchasing by SCCOG member towns. This was previously studied by the SCCOG in 1994, and it is hoped that SCCOG staff can initiate this part of the project in early 2009.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

In FY 2008, technical assistance to local land use commissions was provided under contract to Bozrah (2), Franklin, Lisbon, North Stonington, Salem, and Sprague.

R P C M E M B E R S :

Bozrah:

Seymour Adelman

Colchester:

James Ford, Secretary
Stacey Brown

East Lyme:

Christopher Sandford
Juane Lange

Franklin:

Calli Carboni
Peg Ayer

Griswold:

Martin McKinney
Robert Parrette

City of Groton:

David Rose
Hubert Poppe

Town of Groton:

Peter Roper
James Sherrard

Ledyard:

Mike Cherry
John Phetteplace

Lisbon:

John Dempsey, Jr.
Lawrence Alice

Montville:

Robert Baron, Chairman
Bart Ferrante, Jr

New London:

Mark Christiansen

North Stonington:

Vilma Gregoropoulos
Elaine Boissevan

Norwich:

Arthur Sharron, Vice Chair
Richard Morell

Preston:

Thomas Fenton

Salem:

Richard Dalkowski
David Bingham

Stonington:

Paul Holland

Stonington Borough:

Lisa vanDyke

Waterford:

Edwin Maguire
Thomas Ward

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 Council of Governments**

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SCCOG Staff:

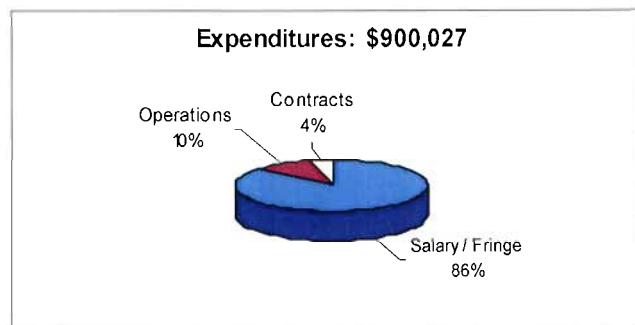
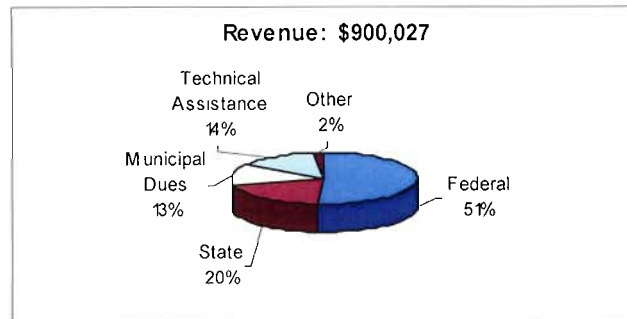
- James S. Butler, AICP
 Executive Director
- Richard Guggenheim
 Assistant Director
- James Rabbitt, AICP
 Planner III
- Thomas Seidel
 Planner III
- Richard Serra
 Planner III
- Wendy Leclair
 Executive Secretary
- Claudia Tamayo
 GIS Coordinator
- Jane Dauphinais
 Director of SECHA

Financed with Grants from the Connecticut Office of Policy & Management and Department of Transportation, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and with funds provided by member Municipalities of the SCCOG

FINANCING

During FY 2008, the Council operated its program with a combination of funds from a variety of sources. Member municipalities contributed toward the support of the Council at the per capita rate of \$0.50. The charts below summarize both revenues and expenditures during the fiscal year.

OPERATING BUDGET, 1 JULY 2007 — 30 JUNE 2008



Based on independent audit by Albert J. Rusilowicz, CPA. Copies of the FY 2008 Audit are available for review at the SCCOG office.