

ANNUAL REPORT 2010

**Southeastern Connecticut
 Council of Governments**

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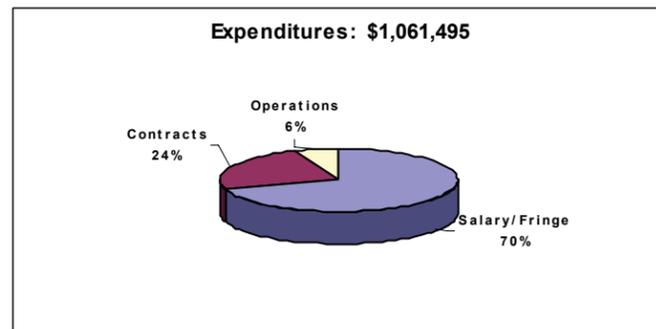
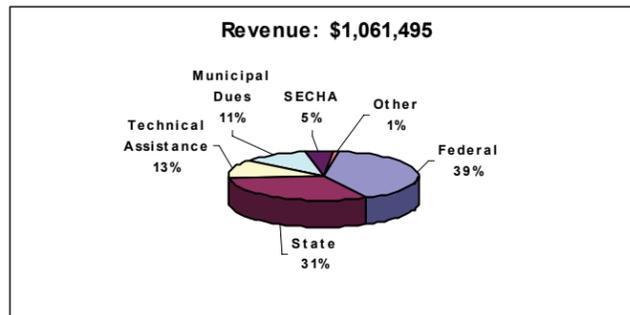
James S. Butler, AICP
 Executive Director
 Richard Guggenheim
 Assistant Director
 James Rabbitt, AICP
 Planner III
 Thomas Seidel
 Planner III
 Richard Serra
 Planner III
 Wendy Leclair
 Executive Secretary
 Liz Crutcher
 GIS Coordinator
 Vacant
 Director of SECHA

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 2010, 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 2010—30 JUNE 2011



Based on independent audit by Albert J. Rusilowicz, CPA. Copies of the FY 2011 Audit are available for review at the SCCOG office.

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 2010 and provides financial information on the fiscal year ending 30 June 2010.

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. Currently, a staff of eight supports the work of the Council, its committees, and the Planning Commission. In December, 2010, the staff consisted of an executive director, an assistant director, three planners, the director of the Southeastern Connecticut Housing Alliance (vacant), 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).

Over the past year, staff continued to draft the Regional Transportation Plan for FY 2011-2040. The current Regional Transportation Plan (2007-2035) 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, and the Plan update will carry these forward in addition to presenting new initiatives.

In 2010, SCCOG approved 35 amendments and 11

actions to the FY 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the region.

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 as needed during the past year. When the mission of the Greenway Authority Commission shifted in 2009 toward constructing a bike/pedestrian facility, SCCOG selected a consultant to support this effort. However, the consultant contract was never executed due to the fact that the State has since chosen to terminate any future work on the development of Route 11, which it has prioritized as a major long-term unfunded initiative. In April 2010, the Greenway Commission wrote a letter to Governor Rell stating that they

SCCOG MEMBERS :

Bozrah:
William Ballinger

Colchester:
Gregg Schuster

East Lyme:
Paul Formica, Secretary

Franklin:
Richard Matters, Chairman

Griswold:
Philip Anthony, Jr.

City of Groton:
Dennis Popp

Town of Groton:
James Streeter
Mark Oefinger, Town Mgr.

Ledyard:
Fred Allyn, Jr.

Lisbon:
Thomas Sparkman

Montville:
Joseph Jaskiewicz

New London:
Rob Pero
Martin Berliner, City Mgr.

North Stonington:
Nicholas Mullane

Norwich:
Peter Nystrom
Alan Bergren, City Manager

Preston:
Robert Congdon, Vice Chair

Salem:
Kevin Lyden

Sprague:
Catherine Osten

Stonington:
Ed Haberek, Jr.

Borough of Stonington:
Donald Maranell

Voluntown:
Ronald Millovitsch

Waterford:
Daniel Steward, Treasurer

AFFILIATE MEMBERS :

Mashantucket Pequot Tribe:
Rodney Butler, Chairman
William Satti, Dir. Public Affairs

Mohegan Tribe:
Bruce Bozsum, Chairman
Chuck Bunnell, Chief of Staff

U.S. Naval Submarine Base
CAPT Marc Denno
Robert Yust, P.E.

U.S. Coast Guard Academy
RADM J. Scott Burhoe
LTCDR Camilla Bosanquet

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS, CONTINUED

would continue its work conditioned upon the following:

- ◆ The Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG) receiving additional funding from CONNDOT to complete the PE for a bike/pedway, and CONNDOT providing the funding for final design at an unknown cost.
- ◆ CONNDOT entering into a contract with its selected consultant to have prepared the PE and environmental mitigation plan required for Route 11.
- ◆ The bike/pedway would then be constructed using funds from a federal earmark with full State funding of the required match.

To date, CONNDOT has responded that the State cannot provide the required resources/funding to advance the project.

This past year, SCCOG continued to support the efforts 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 the 12-month period from October 2009 through September 2010, a total of 299,996 trips were supported by this system. This represents a reduction from the previous year which is explained by a reduction in funding for the program.

Staff continues to work on 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.

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 2010, SCCOG continued the creation of a web-based GIS for the region which was created using a Regional Performance Incentive Program grant from OPM in the amount of \$287,430. The regional GIS was launched in December 2009.

In August 2008, SCCOG initiated a \$750,000

CONNDOT funded study of the Union Station/Regional Intermodal Transportation Center in New London. This study was managed by SCCOG and was completed in the spring of 2010. The study made recommendations involving improvements to both the physical and operational connections between the various modes of transportation. At the request of CONNDOT, SCCOG engaged its consultant to perform additional work analyzing the costs of operation and maintenance of the transportation and City-owned parking garage. The study and study addendum both advocate for CONNDOT assuming some type of role in managing and operating the train station, in order to ensure that the RITC is a world class facility.

SCCOG is a participant on the local planning 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, two of which have been revised by the Advisory Committee. Because of staffing shortages and a greater than normal workload, the project was temporarily put on hold. CONNDOT is close to finalizing the third working paper which covers recommended alternatives. When this review is completed an Advisory Committee meeting will be scheduled. The working 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. The plan will cover a 20-year period through the year 2028. Detailed information on the plan update process can be found at the airport master plan update website at <http://www.groton-newlondonairport-ampu.org>.

In December 2009, SCCOG staff began participating on an Advisory Committee for the Multi-Modal Study for the Mystic Seaport Area. A Congressional earmark is funding this study, which will consider options to aid vehicular and pedestrian movement, ease traffic congestion, investigate off-street parking options, capitalize on regional intermodal transportation options, and enhance the experience of visitors to Mystic. The Advisory Committee met several times in 2010, and two public information meetings were held.

During 2010, SCCOG aggressively initiated its STP-U Program under SAFETEA-LU. This program provides approximately \$3 million in federal funds to the region for municipalities to use for transportation improvement projects. In 2010, SCCOG produced an STP-U Policy Document detailing how the solicitation for projects would be made and projects evaluated. A total of 11 projects in 7 municipalities were selected by SCCOG for funding under this program this year. These projects will be implemented over the next several years and SCCOG expects to add other transportation improvements in future years as funding allows.

SCCOG annually conducts a solicitation for projects federally funded under the Local Road Accident Reduction Program. This funding source allows municipalities to correct structural deficiencies on local roads not on the federal aid system where a link can be demonstrated between the deficiency and recorded accidents. In 2010, SCCOG nominated two projects for funding under this program; one in Stonington and one in New London.

REGIONAL PLANNING :

The 2002 SCCOG Housing analysis led to the creation of the Blue Ribbon Housing Initiatives Panel (BRHIP). 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. In 2010, SECHA worked with several SCCOG municipalities on the preparation of Incentive Housing Zones and SECHA received a \$197,000 Congressional earmark to maintain operations and a \$28,000 grant from the National Association of Realtors to conduct a housing market survey of the region. During the year, SECHA updated its Strategic Plan. At the end of 2010, SECHA was conducting a search for a new director to replace Jane Dauphinais who resigned in August.

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 2008 Homeland Security grant, a three-COG region Regional Emergency Planning Team (REPT), chaired by Lisbon First Selectman Thomas Sparkman, adopted a spending plan for the fiscal year.

During the year, SCCOG's Regional Water Committee, including participation from the region's three major municipal water utilities, and the Mohegan Tribal Utility, began preparation of a plan that would create a regional water network. One of the keys to this plan is the East Lyme-New London regional water project, which SCCOG has endorsed, and on which significant progress toward implementation has been made.

SCCOG staff reviewed 55 legislatively required referrals (through November 22nd) for member municipalities during the year.

OTHER SCCOG ACTIVITIES :

In August, the SCCOG held a retreat to set the groundwork for a number of issues facing the SCCOG and its members.

SCCOG continued to participate in the activities of the Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board (EWIB). The EWIB 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 throughout 2010 with the region's legislative delegation. In December, the SCCOG met with the delegation to discuss the 2011 SCCOG Legislative agenda.

In April, OPM Secretary Robert Genuario met with the SCCOG to discuss the State's fiscal issues. During the year, SCCOG meetings were also attended by Dept. of Consumer Protection Commissioner Gerry Farrell; Dept. of Transportation Commissioner Joe Marie; Dept. of Environmental Protection Commissioner Amy Marella; and Dept. of Economic Development Commissioner Joan McDonald.

During the past year, SCCOG surveyed its members on the issues of the potential for shared or regional revaluations; municipal budget data, which resulted in an analysis of this budget data over a ten-year period; and to determine interest in a regional ethics commission.

In October, the SCCOG held separate meetings with Democratic gubernatorial candidate (now Governor-elect) Dannel Malloy and Lt. Governor-candidate Mark Boughton.

In November, a HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant in the amount of \$225,000 was awarded to a consortium consisting of SCCOG, SECHA, WINCOG, NECCOG and EWIB, one of only 45 such grants awarded in the country.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE :

In FY 2010-2011, technical assistance to local land use commissions is being provided under contract to Bozrah (2), Franklin, Lisbon and Sprague. Additionally, SCCOG drafted Incentive Housing Zone regulations for East Lyme.

RPC MEMBERS :

Bozrah:
Seymour Adelman

Colchester:
James Ford
Stacey Brown

East Lyme:
Christopher Sandford
Luane 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, Vice Chairman
John Phetteplace

Lisbon:
John Dempsey, Jr.
Lawrence Alice

Montville:
Robert Baron
Bart Ferrante, Jr.

New London:
Mark Christiansen, Secretary

North Stonington:
Elaine Boissevain

Norwich:
Arthur Sharron, Chairman
Richard Morell

Preston:
Thomas Fenton

Salem:
David Bingham

Stonington:
Paul Holland

Stonington Borough:
Lissa vanDyke

Waterford:
Edwin Maguire
Thomas Ward