

# Capitol Region Council of Governments

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**TO:** CAPITOL REGION MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS

- CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS
- TOWN MANAGERS
- MUNICIPAL PLANNERS AND PLANNING DIRECTORS
- PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION CHAIRMEN
- OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES

**FROM:** MARY ELLEN KOWALEWSKI  
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**SUBJECT:** OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON DRAFT REGIONAL PLAN OF CONSERVATION  
AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

**DATE:** JULY 10, 2009

The Capitol Region Council of Governments has prepared a draft update of *Achieving the Balance: A Plan of Conservation and Development for the Capitol Region*. This plan is a general guide for the future conservation and development of the greater Hartford area. Its individual chapters provide an overview of the many factors that influence our regional development pattern, and the choices available to us as we move into the future.

State statutes require that our regional plan be updated this year to incorporate six growth management principles, established in the State Conservation and Development Policies Plan 2005-2010. We have used this opportunity to review the entire plan to determine other areas that required update at this time.

The draft plan is available on the CRCOG Website at:

[http://www.crcog.org/Meetings\\_minutes/mm\\_regional\\_planning.html](http://www.crcog.org/Meetings_minutes/mm_regional_planning.html)

or may be obtained by calling 860-522-2217 ext. 237 or ext. 219. Comments on the Draft Plan are welcome, and may be presented at a Public Hearing to be held on Monday, September 14, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at the West Hartford Town Hall, Room 400, 50 South Main Street, West Hartford, CT or submitted in writing to Mary Ellen Kowalewski, Director of Community Development, CRCOG, 241 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06106 or by email to [mkowalewski@crcog.org](mailto:mkowalewski@crcog.org) through September 14, 2009.

The Public Hearing site—West Hartford Town Hall—is handicapped accessible. Persons requiring auxiliary aids for participation in this hearing should contact CRCOG as soon as possible. A Spanish-language translator can also be made available with sufficient notice. Un traductor estará disponible para estas reuniones si usted lo solicita al 522-2217, lo más pronto posible.

## **Background Information on Regional Plan Update**

The Regional Plan was last updated in 2003. Under State Statutes and the CRCOG Bylaws, the CRCOG Regional Planning Commission has primary responsibility for developing the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development and keeping it up-to-date. The CRCOG Policy Board has authority to adopt the plan.

## Regional Plan Update Memo, Page 2

As was stated previously, State statutes require that our regional plan be updated this year to incorporate six growth management principles, established in the State Conservation and Development Policies Plan 2005-2010. The policies contained in the State Conservation and Development Plan text provide the context and direction for state agencies to implement their plans and actions in a manner consistent with six Growth Management Principles (GMPs). These principles are:

- 1) Redevelop and Revitalize Regional Centers and Areas with Existing or Currently Planned Physical Infrastructure;
- 2) Expand Housing Opportunities and Design Choices to Accommodate a Variety of Household Types and Needs;
- 3) Concentrate Development Around Transportation Nodes and Along Major Transportation Corridors to Support the Viability of Transportation Options;
- 4) Conserve and Restore the Natural Environment, Cultural and Historical Resources, and Traditional Rural Lands;
- 5) Protect and Ensure the Integrity of Environmental Assets Critical to Public Health and Safety; and
- 6) Promote Integrated Planning Across all Levels of Government to Address Issues on a Statewide, Regional and Local Basis.

We have found the guiding principles of our regional plan to be consistent with these six growth management principles.

The most significant part of the regional plan update process was working closely with our municipal planners and the Regional Planning Commission to develop three new plan components:

- 1) A revised **Land Use Policy Map**, which better reflects the State's growth management principles and our regional plan's guiding principles.
- 2) A **conservation and development matrix** which explains in narrative and visual form the area designations found on the Land Use Policy Map. This matrix will facilitate the use of the plan in our regional review activities, and will also help others outside of our agency to better understand the Land Use Policy Map.
- 3) A map and matrix which identifies **Capitol Region Areas of Municipal Focus**, which will be taken into account in our regional review activities. The Municipal Focus Areas were identified by Capitol Region municipal planners, and represent existing conservation and development efforts that are in keeping with the goals and policies of the CRCOG Regional Plan.

Only minor changes were made to the narrative portions of the Plan. There were no major changes to the Plan's Goals and Policy Recommendations. The updated Plan does incorporate reference to and recommendations from recent CRCOG plans and projects, such as the Regional Transportation Plan, the Regional Bike and Pedestrian Plan, and CRCOG's Agricultural Viability Project. The Update also considered other recent plans, policies and projects including municipal plans of conservation and development, the MetroHartford Alliance CEDS, and the Metropolitan District Commission Clean Water Project. Also, post-2000 Census data was included, when readily available.

On September 17<sup>th</sup>, the CRCOG Regional Planning Commission will meet to consider public comment and make final revisions to the draft plan. The CRCOG Policy Board will be asked to consider plan adoption at its September 23, 2009 meeting.