

ANNUAL REPORT 2011

**Southeastern Connecticut
 Council of Governments**

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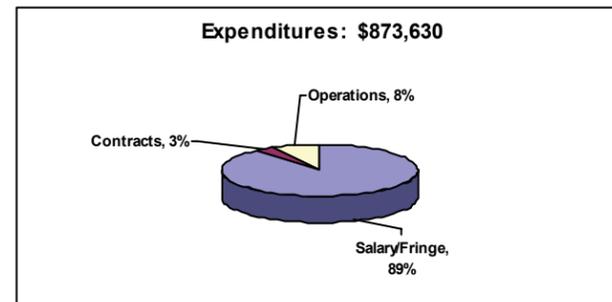
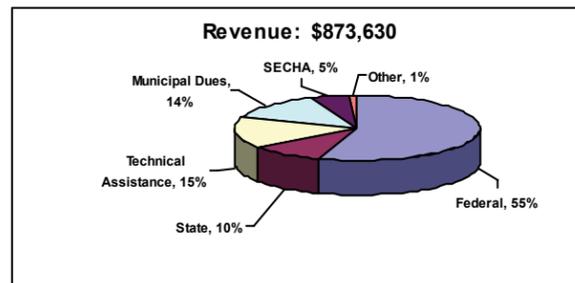
James S. Butler, AICP
 Executive Director
 Richard Guggenheim
 Assistant Director
 James Rabbitt, AICP
 Planner III
 Thomas Seidel
 Planner III
 Richard Serra
 Planner III
 Wendy Leclair
 Executive Secretary
 Liz Crutcher
 GIS Coordinator
 Nancy MacMillan
 Director of SECHA

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 2011, 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 2011 and provides financial information on the fiscal year ending 30 June 2011.

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, 2011, 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).

SCCOG adopted the FY 2011-2040 Regional Transportation Plan in April 2011. The 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, and the Plan update will carry these forward in addition to presenting new initiatives.

In 2011, SCCOG approved 54 amendments and 40 actions to the FY 2010-2013 Transportation Improve-

ment 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 bike-pedway/greenway which is integral to the Route 11 project. The Commission met as needed during the past year. In 2009, when the State chose to terminate any future work on Route 11, the GAC began to re-evaluate its mission. This occurred at the same time that a large Federal earmark was going to require that the GAC shift its focus from acquiring large parcels of land to protect the environmental resources to constructing a bike-pedway. The Greenway Commission's main focus is now directed toward assisting the State in moving forward with completing the Environmental Impact Study including developing a financial and environ-



SCCOG MEMBERS :

Bozrah:
William Ballinger

Colchester:
Gregg Schuster

East Lyme:
Paul Formica, Treasurer

Franklin:
Richard Matters

Griswold:
Philip Anthony, Jr.

City of Groton:
Marian Galbraith

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

Ledyard:
John Rodolico

Lisbon:
Thomas Sparkman

Montville:
Ron McDaniel

New London:
Daryl Finizio

North Stonington:
Nicholas Mullane

Norwich:
Peter Nystrom
Alan Bergren, City Manager

Preston:
Robert Congdon, Chairman

Salem:
Kevin Lyden, Secretary

Sprague:
Catherine Osten

Stonington:
Ed Haberek, Jr.

Borough of Stonington:
Paul Burgess

Voluntown:
Ronald Millovitsch

Waterford:
Daniel Steward, Vice Chair

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 Sandra Stosz
LTCDR Anna Hickey

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS, CONTINUED

mental mitigation plan.

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 2010 through September 2011, a total of 263,181 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 2011, 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. 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. During this past year, SCCOG continued to advocate for CONNDOT assistance in the implementation of the study's recommendations.

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, three of which have been reviewed by the Advisory Committee. Because of staffing shortages and a greater than normal workload, the pace of the project has slowed down. During the past year the Advisory Committee reviewed the third paper which presented three airport layout alternatives. The State and its consultant are currently working on the preferred alternative recommendations for best use of airport real estate. After these recommendations are presented in working paper four, which is on the environmental effects and includes a noise model, there will be a meeting of the Advisory Committee, followed by a public meeting. 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 funded this study, which recommended 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 study was concluded this past year.

During 2010, SCCOG aggressively initiated its STP-U Program under SAFETEA-LU. This program annually 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. During 2011, SCCOG worked with CONNDOT's Project Development staff to see these projects advanced.

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.

SCCOG also annually solicits for projects under the Federal Transit Administration 5310 Program which provides capital funds to public and private non-profit agencies for handicapped-accessible vans and buses. During 2011, the Town of Colchester and Easter Seals each received a vehicle under this program.

In November, 2011, SCCOG also solicited for projects under the SAFETEA-LU Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ) as well as the Transportation Enhancement Program.

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. Nancy MacMillan began work as SECHA's Director in January, 2011. In 2011, SECHA conducted a housing market survey of the region and finalized an update to its Strategic Plan.

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 2009 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, finalized preparation of a plan that would create a regional water network. At the end of 2011, the SCCOG was scheduled to make a presentation on this plan to the State's Water Planning Council. 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. The SCCOG also retained a consultant to prepare permit applications needed to implement the regional water supply response plan.

In 2011, the SCCOG worked with seCTer to update the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). This document was endorsed by the SCCOG and adopted by seCTer in November, and submitted to EDA for approval in December.

The SCCOG formed a Regional Human Services Coordinating Council this past year. The Council functions as a special committee of the SCCOG, and is currently co-chaired by TVCCA Executive Director Deborah Monahan and Chuck Seeman, President of UCFS.

In November, SCCOG was notified by CT DEEP that it had been awarded a FEMA grant to update its Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan. SCCOG has retained Milone and MacBroom as its consultant for this project.

SCCOG staff reviewed 62 legislatively required referrals in 2011 (through December 2nd) for member municipi-

palities during the year.

OTHER SCCOG ACTIVITIES :

In October, the SCCOG held its second retreat at the Mystic Seaport. The outcome of this Retreat will be the development of a strategic message and plan for the SCCOG.

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.

The SCCOG continued to host a number of guest speakers who addressed the COG at their monthly meetings including State Comptroller Kevin Lembo who attended the March meeting, and Secretary of State Denise Merrill who met with the SCCOG in September.

In November 2010, 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. Work began on this project during 2011. The consortium has retained the firm of Fitzgerald and Halliday to assist with this project.

SCCOG commemorated the 50th Anniversary of its founding as the Southeastern Connecticut Planning Agency in 1961. In October, the SCCOG held a Gala dinner at Lake of Isles to celebrate this milestone.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE :

In FY 2011-2012, technical assistance to local land use commissions is being provided under contract to Bozrah (2), Franklin, Lisbon, Sprague and the Borough of Stonington. GIS assistance is being provided to Sprague and Griswold.

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 Chair
John Phetteplace

Lisbon:
John Dempsey, Jr.
Lawrence Alice

Montville:
Robert Baron
Bart Ferrante, Jr.

New London:
Mark Christiansen, Secy.

North Stonington:
Elaine Boissevain

Norwich:
Arthur Sharron, Chairman
Richard Morell

Preston:
Thomas Fenton

Salem:
David Bingham

Stonington:
Paul Holland

Stonington Borough:
David Atkinson

Waterford:
Edwin Maguire
Thomas Ward