



**SOUTHEASTERN
CONNECTICUT
COUNCIL OF
GOVERNMENTS**

5 Connecticut Avenue
Norwich, CT 06360
(860)889-2324
secogct.gov

Representing 22 towns, cities, and
boroughs in Southeastern Connecticut.

TO: SECOG Board of Directors
FROM: Amanda Kennedy, Executive Director
MEETING: March 19, 2025
SUBJECT: Monthly Executive Director's Report

1) Financial and Management Matters

- A) Chamber of Commerce award: SECOG will be recognized at the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT's annual meeting on 3/25 with a "Strategic Partnership" award.
- B) Municipal Services: With a shortage of town planners available in the area, I am working with our Regional Planning staff to train them to be able to staff local planning & zoning commissions when needed.
- C) State Funding: Several bills have been proposed that would provide COGs with additional funding for specific services, including stormwater management, solid waste, coordination, and housing technical assistance.
- D) Federal grants/funding: Dir. Of Transportation Planning Kate Rattan and I are preparing our 26-27 transportation planning workplan in compliance with federal requirements. We are monitoring new directives coming from the federal government. Contracts for SECOG's competitive federal grants (defense and Safety Action Plan) have been fully executed and are expected to be allowed to proceed. We are monitoring potential cash flow risks of any interruptions to funding availability. Applications are pending or being prepared for existing programs at EPA and the Department of Defense. I have provided a summary of grant status to Rep. Courtney's office for their awareness. Dir of Regional Planning Helen Zincavage and I will attend the Association of Defense Communities' Summit later this month to learn more about the direction of DOD programs affecting defense communities.
- E) FY 2025 audit: Audit is delayed due to ongoing conversations with our accountant about how our municipal services RPIP grant should be coded to the various funding sources involved.

2) Transportation

If disability or language assistance is needed, please contact SECOG at 860-889-2324, office@secogct.gov.

Si necesita asistencia lingüística, por favor comuníquese a SECOG.

如果需要残障或语言帮助, 请联系 SECOG.

- Funding Programs

- (1) LOTCIP: Executive Committee recommends requesting all **four “phase one” applications (Windham, Preston, Stonington, and East Lyme) to prepare full applications. Projects have a preliminary value of \$6M, less than the potential \$13M available in this round, so we plan another round of applications this fall.**

Debra Pierce has taken over primary responsibility for LOTCIP activities. Expect \$5 million per year in funding ongoing.

(a) Projects Completed/Pending Closeout:

- (i) Colchester - Halls Hill Road – submitted partial Audit package
- (ii) City of Groton - Poquonnock Road – none
- (iii) Montville - Old Colchester Road – none
- (iv) New London - Jefferson Avenue – none
- (v) New London - Ocean Avenue – none
- (vi) Norwich - Dunham Street – none
- (vii) Waterford - Cross Road – none

(b) Under Construction

- (i) Colchester - Lebanon Avenue – none
- (ii) Ledyard - Gallup Hill Road/Col Ledyard Highway – none

(c) In Design/Received Commitment to Fund

- (i) Bozrah - Fitchville Road – addressing comments from District 2
- (ii) East Lyme - East Pattagansett Road – working on permitting
- (iii) Lisbon - Route 12 – finishing environmental permitting
- (iv) New London - Broad Street/Williams Street – working on permitting
- (v) Norwich/Montville - New London Turnpike – working on assessments
- (vi) Preston - Poquetanuck Road Phase I – none

(d) Applications in Development (solicitation year)

- (i) Montville - Route 32 (2022)- not moving forward
- (ii) New London - Vauxhall Street (2024) – addressing changes for application
- (iii) Preston - Poquetanuck Road Phase 2 (2024) – met with SECOG/CTDOT
- (iv) Stonington - Taugwonk Road Bridge (2024) – received CTF letter

(2) Transportation Rural Improvement Program (TRIP):

- a. In Design/Received Commitment to Fund: Preston - final design submitted to CTDOT, permitting underway

(3) Transportation Alternatives (TAP)

- a. CTDOT announced 2/11 that funding is expected to be awarded to the two pending applications from SE CT (Preston Poquetanuck Village Heritage Walk Phase 2 and Windham Air Line Trail Bridge Resurfacing).

(b) Projects underway:

- (i) Norwich- NL Tpke S: City purchasing easements, contract documents approved.
- (ii) New London- Williams St: Completing survey and starting design of improvements.
- (iii) Groton- G&S Trail to Thomas Rd: Consultant selected, scoping underway.

(4) Active Transportation Microgrants (up to \$5,000 for bike/ped muni/education/non-profit/health districts): 2025 Round 1 applications due to SECOG March 20th.

\$750,000 is available statewide for CY2025. Program changes include expanded eligibility for bike racks and health districts. Municipalities are encouraged to review appendix E of the 2019 Regional Bike and Pedestrian Plan for potential bike rack locations. Additionally, CTDOT has offered event assistance for awardees (contact bridget.moriarty@ct.gov).

(5) Recreational Trails: News from DEEP: DEEP has established a policy and process for signing trail crossings. New contact for CT Trail Finder is Laura Kelly.

(6) Community Connectivity: CTDOT is accepting applications through May 21st for funding for municipal construction projects between \$100,000 and \$800,000 that improve safety and accessibility for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.

- SECOG Plans/Studies

- (1) Metropolitan Transportation Plan
- (2) Transportation Improvement Plan

- (3) Safety Action Plan: Project kick-off held in January. Vision Zero (steering) committee to hold its first meeting 3/12. Website is being constructed. (SS4A discretionary planning funding)

B)

- (1) Congestion Mitigation Process: SECOG working with consultant (VN) to update CMP, which will include outreach to municipalities.
- (2) Regional Bike/Ped Plan
- (3) Corridor Studies:
 - (a) Route 32: CTDOT reported that recommendations of the RT32 study have been assigned a project manager. Connecticut College will submit an application for funding to replace the existing pedestrian bridge over Route 32
 - (b) East Lyme Rte 161: CTDOT requested additional information. SECOG will task PL consultant to do supplementary analysis.
- Other Plans/Studies
 - (1) Amtrak Providence-New Haven Capacity: SECOG received update from Amtrak that consultant procurement has been delayed; project kickoff in early 2025.
 - (2) I-95 Eastern CT PEL: CTDOT met internally to discuss alternatives, no coordination update.
 - (3) CTDOT Capital Plan 2025-2029:
 - (4) Groton-Stonington Bike/Ped Road Safety: Groton Study is being finalized. Stonington coordinated with SECOG regarding discretionary funding of design.
 - (5) Waterford Route 1
 - (6) New London Bank/Truman
 - (7) Norwich- Occum Business Park: SECOG (Rattan/Kennedy) met with NCDC.
- Transit
 - (1) Bus Shelter/Signage Program: SEAT continues the effort to request shelters through the statewide shelter program.
- 5310/MGP: **CTDOT announced 5310 solicitation of FY2024 funds, applications are due May 15, SECOG relayed the solicitation to municipal and non-profit**

senior/disabled transportation entities. FY2023 awardees participated in pre-procurement activities with CTDOT.

- Federal Grants: SS4A 2023 funds awarded, see Safety Action Plan under Studies/Plans.

Federal discretionary grants not yet obligated are being reviewed. New federal policies may affect obligated discretionary grants.

- Electric Vehicles: Contact Emily Bigl to be added to the SECOG EV info group.
- Letters of Support: none.

C) Municipal Services

- Technical Assistance

(1) Planning: provided to Franklin, Bozrah, Lisbon, Sprague. As noted, Phil Chester has been contracted to provide services to Franklin in addition to Sprague. SECOG GIS assisting Colchester with POCD preparation.

(2) Building Inspection: provided to Bozrah, Franklin, Montville, Preston (supported by RPIP grant). Setting up additional vacation/emergency coverage. Most towns are now on year three of the RPIP grant, paying 75% of service cost. BO Trainee transitioning to Montville employment.

(3) Zoning/blight enforcement: provided to Bozrah, Griswold, Preston, Sprague (first three supported by RPIP grant)

- Training/Support:

(1) OSHA training for field services: SECOG held OSHA training Colchester for municipal field inspection staff.

(2) Expect training on meeting management in the next few months.

(3) Updated white paper on Short-Term Rentals published in October.

(4) **Cell-Tower leases: I was asked to survey towns regarding cell tower practices. Contact me for findings.**

D) Regional Planning

- Open Space/Conservation (Melonakos-Harrison):

(1) **Funding Alert: DEEP Land & Water Conservation Fund-Outdoor Recreation & Legacy Partnership Program provides 50% matching**

grants to municipalities and Tribal Governments for park acquisition and improvement projects serving underserved communities. Deadline for submission to DEEP 4/1 and 9/1. Contact: cameron.clegg@ct.gov.

- (2) **SECOG submitted letter of support and commitment to partner for TVCCA's application for funding through CT DEEP's Community Resource Hub program, which will connect local communities to DEEP programs and information. SECOG also coordinated with Preston staff regarding data collection needs.**
- Solid Waste: Next meeting 4/22. **Bus tour planned for 5/8. SECOG submitted testimony in favor of solid waste bills.**
 - GIS: SECOG will receive \$200,000+ in 2025-2026 to support improvements to municipal parcel/CAMA data. **David Cook has been meeting with assessors and GIS firms to develop a project work plan to submit by March 31st to OPM.**
 - Human Services Coordinating Council: On hold pending staff assignments.
 - Regional Emergency Management: Deb Pierce met with Mike Caplet to plan a restart of RESF-1, Transportation, with a focus on coordinating potential evacuation resources.
 - Brownfields: SECOG submitted application for EPA Coalition Assessment Grant in partnership with Eastern CT Land Bank, UConn TAB, and CT RC&D to support assessment and remediation. Initial sites in Windham, Sprague, Preston, and Griswold. Existing grant-funded assessments underway in Windham and Waterford.
 - Regional Plan of Conservation and Development: will begin in 2025 for 2027 adoption. seCTer and SECOG are discussing ways to collaborate on parallel POCD/CEDS planning processes.
 - Resilience
 - (1) Hazard Mitigation Planning: SECOG is developing a map of HMP recommendations to better identify opportunities for implementation funding.
 - (2) **Yantic River Flooding:** Flood prevention planning underway in partnership with CIRCA, whose consultants are evaluating three target areas for further development.

SECOG submitting application 3/14 for ~\$350,000 in EPA BRIC funding to plan flood interventions at three sections.

(3) Watersheds: Mr. Robinson developing white paper on watershed planning in SE CT.

(4) Stormwater: **SECOG will reboot MS4 stormwater collaborative with first meeting 3/27.** SECOG coordinating with CTDOT re CTDOT's outreach to towns for CTDOT's own MS4 permit. Gov. Lamont's budget includes dedicated funding to COGs to provide technical assistance and regional coordination regarding stormwater.

(5) Extreme Heat: **SECOG submitted application to Environmental Justice New England/EPA for \$350,000 for extreme heat mitigation projects in New London.** SECOG submitted application for EPA grant focused on extreme heat mitigation, in partnership with United Way SECT. SECOG is reviewing other potential funding sources to support aspects of the proposed project, especially as it is likely the EPA grant program will be terminated.

- Utilities

(1) Drinking Water: WUCC convening pending direction from CT DPH.

(2) Wastewater: 2019 Plan to be reviewed for next steps.

- Defense Industry Coordination

(1) SECOG working with Groton Utilities and Eversource on resiliency planning, with intent to apply for DCIP implementation funds later this year.

(2) SECOG will begin new Compatible Use Plan project shortly; additional grant funds for Town of Groton housing work.

(3) Kennedy and Zincavage to attend ADC Defense Communities Conference. I am in touch with Courtney's office regarding the status of defense-related grants.

- Housing:

(1) Hard copies of SECHA/SECOG's Achievable Housing Lookbook are available for widespread distribution.

(2) **I attended a briefing by OPM and their consultant preparing options for fair share housing legislation, and provided comments.**

- Economic Development

(1) Legislatively appointed Mystic Tourism Working Group has met over the fall and will issue a report for the end of the year with recommendations for transportation, infrastructure and development.

- Letters of Support: none other than TVCCA
- Legislative: SECOG submitted testimony regarding solid waste and local tax revenue.