

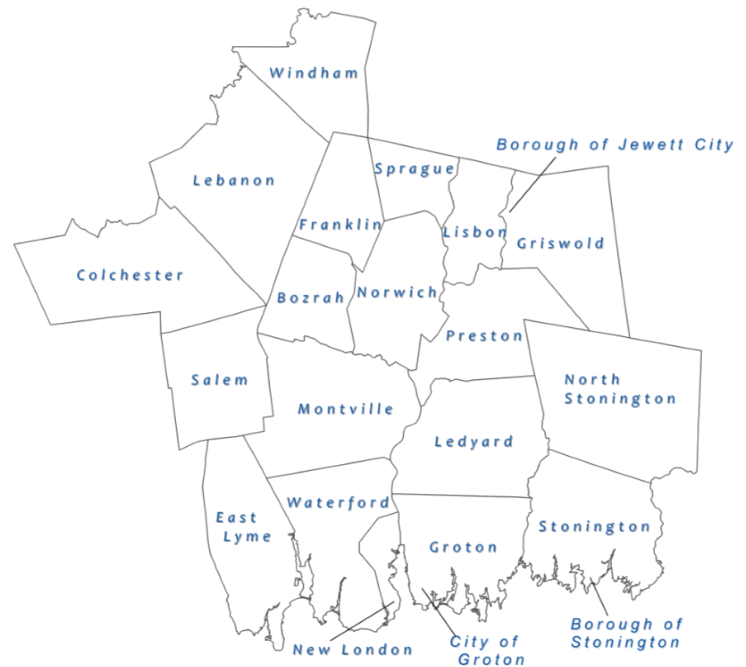
# FY2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT

December 2019

## INTRODUCTION

The Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG) is one of nine regional councils of governments in Connecticut, 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 structure for intergovernmental cooperation for a wide range of issues facing southeastern Connecticut. Its predecessor, the Southeastern Connecticut Regional Planning Agency, was first established in January 1961. This annual report reviews SCCOG activities during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019. For the latest news from SCCOG, visit us on the web at [www.seccog.org](http://www.seccog.org) or on Facebook ([SeCTCOG](#)).

Municipal chief elected officials from SCCOG's 22 member municipalities serve as SCCOG's policy board. The Council's bylaws provide for participation on a non-voting basis by representatives from the Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan tribes, Naval Submarine Base New London, and U.S. Coast Guard Academy.



## TRANSPORTATION

SCCOG is the state-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the purposes of carrying out the regional transportation system planning and programming required under the Federal Transportation Act Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST ACT), PL114-94. The SCCOG region was designated a Transportation Management Area (TMA) in 2012 because its urbanized area has a population greater than 200,000, requiring SCCOG to establish a Congestion Management Process (CMP).

Major tasks include updating the regional transportation plan; data collection and analysis; updating the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) activities related to meeting the requirements of the Clean Air Act Amendments; technical assistance to municipalities; public information; and participation with CTDOT in a variety of projects. Other tasks include further development of the Council's Geographic Information

System capability (GIS); a comprehensive regional survey of local land use; and special studies as needed. Since 2014, SCCOG has received funding from CTDOT to administer and manage the Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) in the region.

Two major transportation documents were prepared and adopted in FY 2019: SCCOG's *2019 - 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan* and SCCOG's *FY 2019 - 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)*. Two major transportation planning projects also began in FY 2019, the *Regional Bike and Pedestrian Plan* (below) and the *Joint Land Use Study Implementation* project (discussed under Regional Planning and Coordination).

SCCOG's *Regional Bike and Pedestrian Plan* – promoted as *Bike Walk SECT* – lays out an ambitious vision

for southeastern Connecticut to improve its regional bicycle/pedestrian network and local bike/ped facilities. Funding for this project was made available by the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management through the 2017 Responsible Growth and Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Grant Program.



*"Pop-Up" Demonstration  
of a Two-Way Cycle Track  
Norwich, April 2019  
(Photo: Cogent)*

The plan's recommendations emphasize developing municipal frameworks to ensure that improvements to bike/ped conditions occur under existing budgets and processes, by, for example, adopting Complete Streets policies and conducting road diets as part of routine restriping/resurfacing. Regional bike route recommendations include a Colchester-to-Norwich route and the Eastern Shoreline Path, which would run from Old Saybrook to the Rhode Island border.

**Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP):** In 2019, SCCOG approved 28 amendments and 29 actions to the region's TIP and provided comments to CTDOT on the FY 2018-2021 State Transportation Improvement Plan.

**Enhanced Mobility (Section 5310 Van Purchases):** SCCOG is required to coordinate the region's applications for funding to address special transportation needs. During FY 2019, funds were awarded for six accessible vehicles as well as for the ECTC's Mobility Project and Voucher Program.

**Local Road Accident Reduction Program (LRAR):** New London received a grant to bring three downtown intersections up to current standards, allowing signal preemption by emergency services, and enabling completion of downtown traffic pattern changes.

**Local Transportation Capital Improvements Program (LOTICIP):** This state grant program funds improvements to local roads. Two projects were completed in 2019, in New London and Montville; and six projects are in design, in Colchester, the City of Groton, New London, Norwich, Sprague, and Waterford.

**Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP):** In FY 2019, the City of New London continued implementing a \$600,000 project to enhance bicycle and pedestrian conditions on Williams Street.

## REGIONAL PLANNING AND COORDINATION

**Military/Community Planning:** After completing a *Joint Land Use Study (JLUS)* with SUBASE New London in 2017, SCCOG received two follow-up grants in 2018 from the U.S. Department of Defense Office of Economic Adjustment to support implementation activities identified in the JLUS: 1) to revise zoning around the entrance to the SUBASE, and 2) to examine the potential impacts of the anticipated ramp-up in hiring by Electric Boat as they relate to additional demand for housing and transportation capacity.

**Fiscal Impacts of Development:** Using funds from SCCOG's Regional Services Grant (RSG), consultants were retained to develop municipally specific fiscal impact analysis tools for SCCOG's member municipalities which can be used to estimate the impact of new construction to municipal revenues and expenses.

**Hazard Mitigation – Community Rating System Assistance:** A grant from the State of Connecticut's Regional Performance Incentive Program (RPIP) enabled SCCOG to contract for technical assistance to its municipalities interested in enrolling in FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS). Consultants to the SCCOG developed guidance materials and provided direct technical assistance to several municipalities navigating the FEMA approval process, including the City of Norwich, now approved as a Class 9 CRS community.

**Southeastern Connecticut Housing Alliance (SECHA):** In FY 2019, SECHA board members and SCCOG staff provided technical assistance and information to six member municipalities.

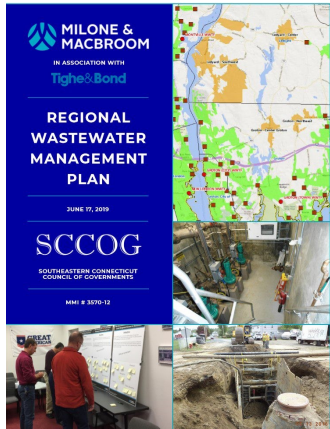
**Planning and Zoning Reviews:** Connecticut statutes require Councils of Governments to review proposed local Plans of Conservation and Development as well as certain zoning and subdivision applications that might impact neighboring municipalities. In FY 2019, SCCOG staff reviewed and responded to 51 statutorily required referrals from its member municipalities.

**Water:** SCCOG staff supports the Eastern Connecticut Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC). The SCCOG also maintains a Regional Water Committee, which serves as the region's water planning body.

**Stormwater:** This past year, SCCOG began partner-

ing with the Eastern Connecticut Conservation District (ECCD) to create a regional stormwater collaborative, which assists municipalities in the region that are required by CT DEEP's MS4 Program to implement stormwater control measures.

**Wastewater Management:** In June 2019, SCCOG completed a *Regional Wastewater Management Plan*, the first in the region since the late 1960s. The plan, funded with Regional Services Grant (RSG) funds, provides an understanding of current conditions of centralized wastewater treatment and collection systems in the region and documents how wastewater flows may change through



2040. The plan identifies certain wastewater infrastructure at increased risk of flooding due to climate change, and identifies both local and regional solutions to meet the region's wastewater needs through 2040.

**Regional Planning Commission:** Representatives of the region's planning and zoning commissions meet quarterly to engage in regional initiatives and to identify issues of common concern. Recent commission meetings have included training on issues related to historic preservation, legislative changes, and approaches to regulating short-term rental properties (aka "AirBNBs").

**Municipal Planner and Commissioner Training:** SCCOG hosted two training sessions for land use commissioners in FY 2019, both conducted by Attorney Steve Byrne, Executive Director of the Connecticut Federation of Planning and Zoning Agencies. SCCOG also convenes the region's professional municipal planners quarterly to present project findings, provide resources, and to identify issues of concern in their towns that the SCCOG might assist in addressing.

**Technical Planning Assistance to Municipalities:** In FY 2019, SCCOG provided municipal planning, zoning, and/or Inland Wetlands services to Bozrah, Franklin, Salem, Sprague, and Lisbon under six contracts.

**Human Services Coordination:** SCCOG staff worked with members of SCCOG's Regional Human Services Coordinating Council (RHSCC) to complete a study that examines the potential for human service

agencies in the region to share services and improve efficiency. The RHSCC has since begun work toward implementation of its recommendations. This study was funded by a State of Connecticut RPIP grant.

**Emergency Management Planning:** SCCOG is the lead fiduciary for the Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) Region 4 Regional Emergency Planning Team (REPT). In FY 2019, the REPT and its REPT Steering Committee approved a \$304,659 budget for the purchase of equipment and services and for training for the region's emergency responders. SCCOG also administered seven other ongoing emergency management grants during the past fiscal year.

**Legislative Activity:** The primary focus of SCCOG's 2019 legislative agenda was promoting legislative solutions to address the impact that non-profit agency property tax exemptions have on municipalities. SCCOG also worked with Congressman Courtney's office to participate in the filing of an Amicus Curiae brief opposing New York's appeal of US EPA's decision to approve the Eastern Long Island Sound dredge disposal site.

**Municipal Shared Services:** SCCOG completed a municipal shared services study in FY 2018, and in FY 2019 began working to implement study recommendations. This past year, meetings were held regarding Public Works and Human Resources functions.

**Regional Geographic Information Systems:** SCCOG maintained and updated regional GIS and property information systems originally developed with OPM grant funding in 2009 and 2013.

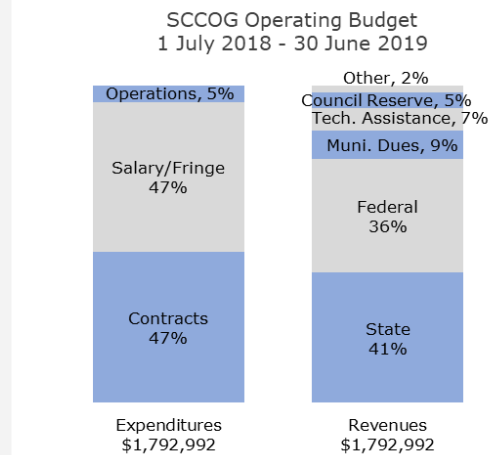
**Election Monitoring:** SCCOG continues to provide Regional Election Monitor (REM) services to its member municipalities.

**Sustainable CT:** Seven member municipalities are now certified in the Sustainable CT program. SCCOG hosted two Sustainable Connecticut Fellows in 2019.

**2020 Census Participation:** SCCOG staff coordinated with the U.S. Census Bureau, State of Connecticut, and SCCOG member municipalities to prepare for the 2020 Decennial Census, with activities including the review of proposed boundary changes and supporting efforts to ensure a complete count of residents in 2020.

During FY 2019, the Council operated its program with a combination of funds from a variety of sources: municipal member dues, Federal grants and programs, State grants and programs, fee-for-service technical assistance and miscellaneous other sources. Member municipalities contributed toward the support of the Council at the per capita rate of \$0.55. The chart to the right summarizes both revenues and expenditures during the fiscal year.

Copies of the FY 2019 independent audit by Hoyt, Filippetti, Malaghan, LLC are available for review at the SCCOG office and at [www.seccog.org](http://www.seccog.org).



## SCCOG MEMBERS (as of Nov. 26, 2019)

Bozrah: Carl Zorn	Lisbon: Tom Sparkman, Chairman	Town of Stonington: Danielle Chesebrough
Colchester: Mary Bylone	Montville: Ron McDaniel	Waterford: Rob Brule
East Lyme: Mark Nickerson, Secretary	New London: Michael Passero	Windham: Victor Funderburk Jim Rivers (Alt)
Franklin: Charles Grant	North Stonington: Michael Urgo	<i>Affiliate Members:</i>
Griswold: Todd Babbitt	Norwich: Peter Nystrom John Salomone (Alt)	Mashantucket Pequot Tribe: Rodney Butler Robert Hayward (Alt)
Borough of Jewett City: Timothy Sharkey	Preston: Sandra Allyn-Gauthier	Mohegan Tribe: James Gessner, Jr. Chuck Bunnell (Alt)
City of Groton: Keith Hedrick	Salem: Kevin Lyden	U.S. Naval Submarine Base CAPT Todd Moore Adam Wright (Alt)
Town of Groton: Patrice Granatosky John Burt (Alt)	Sprague: Cheryl Allen Blanchard	U.S. Coast Guard Academy RADM William Kelly LCDR Daniel Stepler (Alt)
Lebanon: Kevin Cwikla	Borough of Stonington: Jeffrey Callahan	
Ledyard: Fred Allyn, III		

## SCCOG STAFF

James S. Butler, AICP <i>Executive Director</i>	Justin LaFountain <i>Planner II</i>	Phil Chester, AICP <i>Contract Planner</i>
Amanda Kennedy, AICP <i>Assistant Director/ Dir. of Special Projects</i>	Carly Myers, AICP <i>Planner II</i>	Michael J. Murphy, AICP <i>Contract Planner</i>
Katherine Rattan, AICP <i>Planner III/ Transportation Program Manager</i>	Wendy Leclair <i>Office Manager</i>	
Samuel Alexander, AICP <i>Planner III</i>	Liz Crutcher <i>GIS Coordinator</i>	