



for the central Connecticut region
fiscal years 2012 to 2016

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Preface

This document, the Public Participation Plan (PPP) of the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency (CCRPA, or ‘the Agency’), serves two purposes:

1. It serves as a guide for Agency staff on where, when, and how to involve the public in the Agency’s Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) activities.
2. It informs the public of opportunities to provide input in these activities.

As the PPP should clarify, CCRPA espouses a public involvement process that provides complete and timely information, public notice, and solicits input from the communities affected by its MPO activities. These activities include, but are not limited to, the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP); the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); this Public Participation Plan (PPP); and special projects such as those described under the Project Schedule in Task 3, *Planning activities*, of the UPWP.

As part of its MPO planning and programming process, CCRPA shall involve as broad and representative a cross-section of the population and the region as practical. Depending on the project in question, these stakeholders may include:

1. Residents, workers, and visitors in the region
2. User groups (including pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders)
3. Transit providers and operators
4. Transportation providers and operators (e.g. truck and rail freight)
5. Local, state, and federal agencies
6. Environmental groups
7. Other non-governmental organizations and interested parties

In all cases, the Agency shall strive to involve stakeholders with an interest in proposed changes to the regional transportation system, in addition to those engaged through the general planning process.

SECTION 5307 GRANT RECIPIENTS

The public involvement plan as described herein and as adopted by the CCRPA for its TIP shall also serve to satisfy all of the public involvement requirements, including provision for public notice, review, and comment, of The New Britain Transportation Company and DATTCO as applicants for regular Section 5307 (FTA Transit Capital) funds.

REVISION HISTORY

Major Revisions: 6/05

Minor Revisions: 6/06

Major Revisions: 11/06, adopted 2/07

Reorganization: 2/11, adopted 5/11

ACCESS TO RESOURCES

PERSONNEL

CCRPA staff shall be available to the public during regular business hours in its offices. Members of the public may contact staff by e-mail, telephone, fax, or postal mail; for in-person assistance, appointments are highly recommended.

The Agency's offices are at 225 North Main Street, Suite 304, Bristol, CT 06010-4993; CCRPA's telephone and fax number is 860-589-7820.

WEB SITE

CCRPA shall maintain a web site. The website shall include the following as a minimum:

1. A calendar of Agency meetings
2. Agendas, supporting documents, and minutes for all official Agency meetings
3. Public notices which the Agency has issued
4. Public reports and plans that the Agency has produced, including public drafts and final versions of the documents listed under *Major planning products*, p. 8
5. Directions to the office and staff contact information

The Agency's web site can be accessed at <http://ccrpa.org>.

DOCUMENTS

CCRPA shall comply with all applicable federal and state "Freedom of Information Laws," including Chapter 14 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended. CCRPA shall furnish physical and/or electronic copies of its documents to any interested party. Copies shall be made available via e-mail and fax as well as in printed and media form.

In addition to relevant State and federal statutes, the operations of CCRPA, including its Board, Committees, and staff, are governed various bylaws, policies, and agreements. Together with agendas, minutes, referrals, resolutions, grant applications, contracts,

budgets, and audit reports, among others. These documents constitute CCRPA’s ‘official records.’ The Agency shall maintain these records and provide them for public inspection at its offices during its working hours. CCRPA shall maintain internal audit, reporting, and record-keeping systems to document and substantiate compliance with standards, and will submit such documentation to the Connecticut Department of Transportation’s (ConnDOT) Office of Contract Compliance, or other appropriate party on request.

MEETINGS AND HEARINGS

Regular and special meetings

The CCRPA Board and Committees shall hold regular meetings and, on occasion, hold special meetings. All meetings with the exception of executive sessions shall be open to the public. Unless otherwise specified, regular meetings shall take place in the Agency’s offices. The location of special meetings shall be specified in the meeting notice.

Notices and documents for regular and special CCRPA Board and Committee meetings shall be distributed as follows:

Whom to send	What	How¹
Municipal clerks ²	Notice and agenda	E-mail/mail
Board/Committee members	Notice, agenda, minutes ³ , supporting documents ⁴	E-mail/mail, web site
Public	Notice, agenda, minutes ³ , supporting documents ⁴	Web site
Interested parties (by request)	Depends on request	E-mail/fax/mail

¹ Slashes indicate ‘or.’ Means of communication are listed in descending order of preference (i.e., documents will be faxed when e-mail is infeasible; when both are impossible, postal mail will be used).

² Of municipalities in the region.

³ Where applicable.

⁴ Where applicable and practical.

Notices and documents shall be distributed a minimum of five (5) Agency working days before a regular meeting and three (3) Agency working days before a special meeting. In addition, a yearly schedule of all regular meetings shall be filed with the Secretary of State, all municipal clerks in the region, and posted on the Agency’s web site by January 31 of every year.

Public hearings and meetings

One or more public hearings or informational meetings as well as a review period shall precede the enactment of substantial changes to major documents. These documents are listed below, together with the respective minimum review period and number of public hearings and/or informational meetings to be observed.

Document	Public hearings and meetings	Review period
Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)	One meeting <i>and</i> one public hearing	30 days
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	One public hearing	30 days
Public Participation Plan (PPP)	One public hearing	45 days
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	None	30 days
Special projects (e.g. those in Task 3 of the UPWP)	Optional	Optional

Due to the frequency of updates to these documents, in particular to the TIP, and the ample opportunities already afforded for public review and participation (meetings are public, with materials posted in advance online), neither a public meeting/informational hearing nor a review period shall be necessary for minor/routine changes to these documents. However, major TIP or LRTP amendments necessitating a new air quality conformity analysis as a result of projects originating or occurring in the region shall be treated as a new substantial change and treated as indicated in the table above.

The following notification schedule shall be observed when setting up public hearings and informational meetings for the Agency Board/Committees:

Whom to notify	When	How
Municipal clerks	At least 30 ⁵ days prior to the end of the public review period	Send public notice/agenda and make available a copy of all public documents
Hartford Courant and/or other media outlets	In time to ensure publication at least 30 ⁵ days prior to the end of the public review period	Legal notice for publication
Adjacent Regional Planning Organizations ⁶	At least 30 ⁵ days prior to the end of the public review period	Send public notice/agenda and make available a copy of all public documents
Agency members and agency website	At least 30 ⁵ days prior to the end of the public review period	Send public notice/agenda and make available a copy of all public documents

Legal notices, summarizing opportunities for commenting on the proposed changes, will include date, time, place, subject, and filing of notice with municipal clerks and will note that relevant documents can be reviewed online, at the Agency’s offices, and at the municipal clerks’. Legal notices for the LRTP shall appear in English and Spanish.

Notices to municipal clerks and the aforementioned Regional Planning Organizations will include date, time, place, subject, agenda, and links to or electronic copies of the relevant documents. Notices to clerks will also include paper copies of the documents and a request to post and keep the relevant documents on file until the date of hearing or end of comment period, whichever is later.

On the public hearing and informational meeting dates, signage to the meeting location will be posted on doors, stairs/elevators, and hallways as necessary.

Comments and input

All meeting agendas shall include an item and include time for ‘Public Comments’ for testimony from the public. Comments may be given live at a meeting; however, the

⁵ 45 days in case of the Public Participation Plan.

⁶ These are currently the Capitol Region Council of Governments, the Midstate Regional Planning Agency, the Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley, and the Litchfield Hills Council of Elected Officials.

meeting or hearing chair shall have the right to set a time limit for spoken testimony. Should a member of the public wish to add an item to a meeting agenda, Agency staff shall do so, provided a formal request to that effect is received at least five (5) days in advance of a scheduled meeting.

Testimony may be submitted in written or recorded form prior to the end of discussion of the pertinent agenda item (for regular or special meetings and public hearings) or, where applicable, after the beginning but before the end of the review period.

Comments and testimony submitted shall become part of the public record.

The Agency shall respond to public comments received on a project with a mandatory review period within fifteen (15) Agency working days. Staff shall provide commenters with notices of forthcoming meetings or hearings associated with the project. Upon completion of the project, CCRPA shall give a summary of its response to significant public comments during the development of such projects.

If the final form of a project differs significantly from the one that was made available for public comment and/or raises new material issues that interested parties could not reasonably have anticipated, CCRPA shall make available an added review period of at least thirty (30) days. This comment period will be advertised in the same manner as the original review period. Those who made comments with contact information shall be notified of the additional period.

MAJOR PLANNING PRODUCTS

CCRPA shall produce the following planning documents as part of its MPO functions. The Agency welcomes public involvement at all times. As part of the development of these documents, Agency staff seeks input from stakeholders and interested parties. This commentary informs the Agency's analyses and draft and final plans/programs.

Development, adoption, and modification of the following documents shall adhere to the process described under *Meetings and hearings*, p. 5. The public may comment on any of these documents by any of the means described under *Personnel*, p. 4, and/or at the public hearing(s) or informational meeting(s) held as part of the planning process.

Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

The LRTP lays out a vision for the future of the region and its transportation system over at least the next twenty-five years and includes mid- and long-term projects. The Plan is produced every four years. The LRTP is developed in the following steps:

1. Data collection, including public input/informational meetings
2. Analysis and plan drafting
3. Review of draft Plan by Transportation Improvement Committee (TIC)
4. Public review period, including public hearing(s)
5. Ratification of the Plan by the MPO Board

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The TIP lists all federally-funded surface transportation projects scheduled to occur in the region over a three to five year period. (Inclusion of a transportation project by the MPO into the TIP is a prerequisite for federal funding.) The TIP is produced every other year but is reprogrammed annually (typically in late spring, with final approval in June) and may be amended during the year. The Program is developed in the following steps:

1. Project collection
 - a. Solicitation of projects from regional stakeholders
 - b. Development of projects by staff
 - c. Receipt of State projects
2. Project evaluation and creation of priority list by staff
3. Development of draft Program based on staff-generated priority list
4. Review and revision of draft Program by TIC
5. Public review period, including public hearing(s)
6. Ratification of the Program by the MPO Board

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The UPWP outlines the transportation planning work the Agency expects to undertake over a two-year period. The Program is developed every other year. *Task 5* of the UPWP (p. 14) lists public involvement efforts for all MPO activities. The Program is developed in consultation with the Agency's TIC and Board.

Annual Listing of Projects

The Annual Listing of Projects takes stock of investments in transportation facilities for which federal funds have been obligated in the preceding year. To comply with Section 13A-153F of the Connecticut General Statutes, which mandates that at least one percent of funds received by the State and any municipality be spent on pedestrian and cyclist facilities, the Listing shall break out pedestrian- and cyclist-related expenditures on a town basis. The Listing is developed by ConnDOT but may be augmented by CCRPA.

FUNDING PROGRAMS

Transportation is funded through a variety of programs. Those in which CCRPA has a decisive role are described below. *This section, which only serves informational purposes, may be revised to reflect changes in State and federal laws, regulations, and policies.*

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM-URBAN (STPU)

STPU funds are the portion of the federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds allocated to MPOs. CCRPA selects STPU from submissions from member towns and other sources. Submissions include project plans, cost estimates, and other information. CCRPA solicits and selects projects approximately every two years (generally as part of development of the TIP). The criteria with which CCRPA reviews, evaluates, and recommends projects for selection can be found in the Agency document *Project Evaluation Criteria*.

Selected projects are incorporated into a priority list. Public input and decisions by the Agency's TIC and/or Board may affect the final priority list.

TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (TEP)

The TEP is funded by the federal STP program. States must spend ten percent of their STP funds on TEP projects. TEP projects serve to enhance the transportation system. There are twelve eligible TEP activities⁷:

1. pedestrian and bicycle facilities

⁷http://www.enhancements.org/12_Activities.htm. Accessed 4/18/04.

2. pedestrian and bicycle safety and educational activities
3. acquisition of scenic or historic easements and sites
4. scenic or historic highway programs including tourist and welcome centers
5. landscaping and scenic beautification
6. historic preservation
7. rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures or facilities
8. conversion of abandoned railway corridors to trails
9. control and removal of outdoor advertising
10. archeological planning and research
11. environmental mitigation of runoff pollution and provision of wildlife connectivity, and
12. establishment of transportation museums.

Every five to six years, CCRPA selects TEP from submissions from member towns and other sources. Submissions include project plans, cost estimates, and other information. The criteria with which CCRPA reviews, evaluates, and recommends projects for selection can be found in the Agency document *Project Evaluation Criteria*.

Selected projects are incorporated into a priority list. Public input and decisions by the Agency's TIC and/or Board may affect the final priority list. Unlike STPU, final authority rests with ConnDOT, which makes selections from the priority lists of MPOs.

CONGESTION MITIGATION AND AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT (CMAQ)

Information to be supplied.

TRANSIT ENHANCEMENTS

Information to be supplied.

APPENDIXES

About CCRPA

The Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency (CCRPA) prepared this document.⁸ As the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for central Connecticut, the Agency plays a key role in planning and the distribution of funds for transportation in the region.

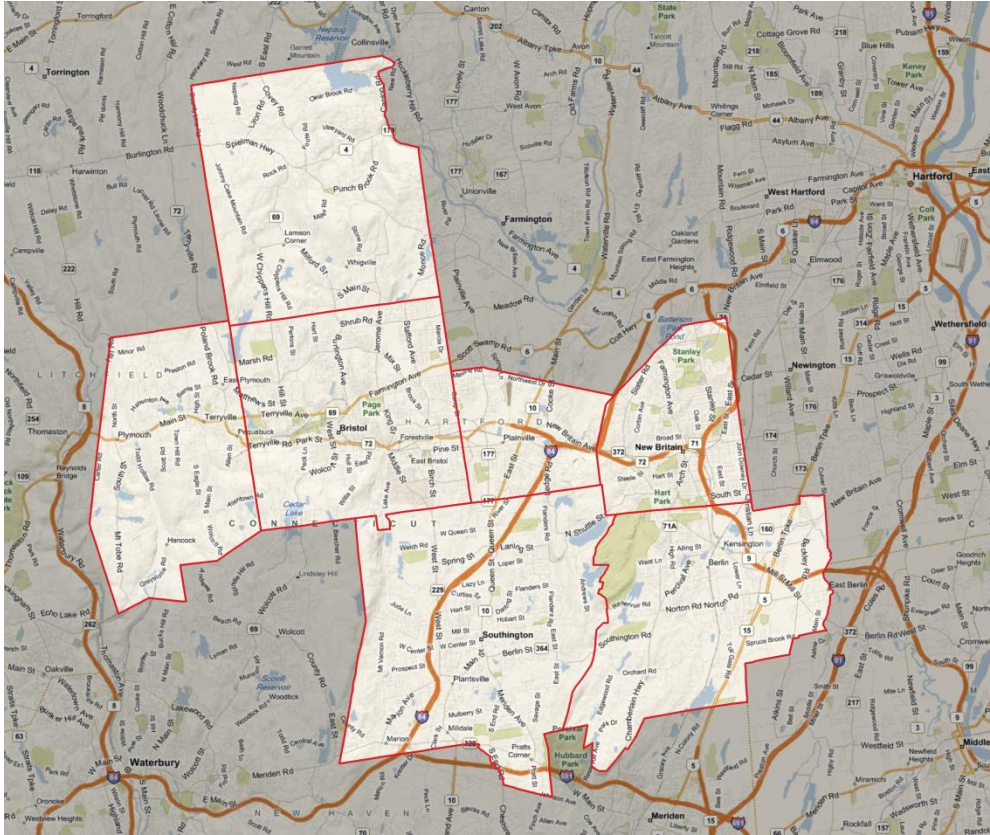
CCRPA arose through the provisions of Chapter 127 of the Connecticut General Statutes, enacted in 1955, which authorized the delineation of regional planning areas and the creation of regional planning agencies in those areas upon vote of the municipalities contained therein. The Agency is governed by a Board of members selected by member municipalities.⁹ Agency members comprise the cities of Bristol and New Britain as well as the towns of Berlin, Burlington, Plainville, Plymouth, and Southington. The Agency's Board first convened on March 17, 1966.

In 1974, CCRPA initiated a transportation planning program under grants from FHWA and the ConnDOT. The transportation planning process is conducted in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding between CCRPA and ConnDOT. A map showing the boundaries of the central Connecticut region, its notable transportation facilities, and its major natural features is below.

⁸ The UPWP is a response to federal regulations. See 23 CFR Part 450.308 for details.

⁹ Representatives are selected in accordance with Chapter 127, Section 8-31 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The Planning and Zoning Commission of each municipality elects one representative; the chief elected official of each municipality appoints one, and, depending on population, the town council may elect another one. As of 2010, the Board has a total of seventeen members; three members each from Bristol, New Britain, and Southington and two members each from Berlin, Burlington, Plainville, and Plymouth. A list of board members is posted on the Agency's web site.

REGIONAL MAP



Special concerns

TITLE VI AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

CCRPA respects the 1994 Executive Order on Environmental Justice (EO 12898), Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and related guidance from the State of Connecticut, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Transit Administration. To this end, in addition to following the notification, publication, and public involvement procedures set forth under *Meetings and hearings* (p. 5), public notices for meetings of the CCRPA and its subcommittees of potential interest to low income or minority persons shall be provided to stakeholders relevant to these persons. These include but are not limited to transit groups, social services providers, nonprofit and community-based organizations, civic clubs, neighborhood groups, revitalization zones, homeowner associations, and media outlets serving low income and minority persons.

In addition, CCRPA shall make reasonable efforts to identify groups with a stake in a given activity or project, establish contact with these groups, and seek to engage them in relevant, meaningful, and satisfactory ways.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

CCRPA devotes special consideration to the needs of individuals with limited English proficiency. Staff shall ensure the availability of document translation into and meeting interpretation for community languages other than English (namely Spanish and Polish). When warranted, staff shall conduct outreach and public participation in languages other than English. CCRPA efforts shall be consistent with the signed Executive Order 13166, “Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency,” dated August 11, 2000.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOURSE

Should a formal complaint about the Agency’s adherence to or performance under any part of this document, including the Title VI and Limited English Proficiency be lodged, it shall be handled according to the Agency’s *MPO Appeals Policy*.

UPWP Task 5 (Public Participation)

OBJECTIVE

Community involvement and observance of civil rights laws and regulations are part and parcel of CCRPA’s activities. CCRPA continues to seek ways to improve its public participation process and will further implement its Public Participation Plan with environmental justice¹⁰ and Title VI outreach elements as well as review procedures in light of recommendations from the MPO recertification review (2010). Procedures have been developed to incorporate the Public Involvement Plan with the overall planning process, with an evaluative component.

CCRPA will continue to seek to involve the public, particularly groups that may be underserved by the transportation planning process, such as minorities, women, the el-

¹⁰ The U.S. DOT defines environmental justice as comprising the following three precepts: 1. To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations. 2. To ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process. 3. To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.

derly, and the disabled. Activities related to these groups will include soliciting input and inviting participation from such groups in all public stages of the transportation planning process as well as operating the workplace in accordance with Federal and State Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Regulations. A continuation of environmental justice components within consideration of the project selection process for STP-Urban funding, and consideration of procedures for incorporation of environmental justice details within the planning process will be an annual task. Procedures for improving outreach to all groups throughout the planning process will be reviewed, modified and implemented with particular attention to these groups. The process of public participation and outreach is regularly reviewed and evaluated for identifying areas needing improvement.

ACTIVITIES

CCRPA will:

1. Evaluate the public involvement process regularly and incorporate new methods into Agency operations and the Public Participation Plan.
2. Expand outreach strategies, including initiatives with community groups.
3. Report on potential and actual project impacts with Social Impact Reports.
4. Examine the distributions of benefits and burdens of transportation investments outlined in the Long-Range Transportation Plan and TIP as it impacts Title VI and/or environmental justice clusters.
5. Provide notice of foreign language assistance upon request on all meeting agendas and for all major products.
6. Document all public involvement activities for the TIP, (E)STIP, Long-Range Transportation Plan, and all planning activities containing public participation components.

PRODUCT SCHEDULE

In addition to the items listed under Task 1:

Item	Release date
Articles and press releases for community and media sources	Ongoing
Outreach to stakeholder groups through various means and media	Project basis
Translated documents upon request	On demand

Public review for the PPP

CCRPA is committed to the continual improvement of all its processes and products. This includes the PPP. The Agency has not received any comments or complaints regarding its public involvement efforts or procedures since ratification of the last update to the Plan or during the preparation and review period for this Plan. Public involvement efforts undertaken by CCRPA as part of this Plan are described in the report entitled *Documentation of public involvement in the LRTP and PPP*.