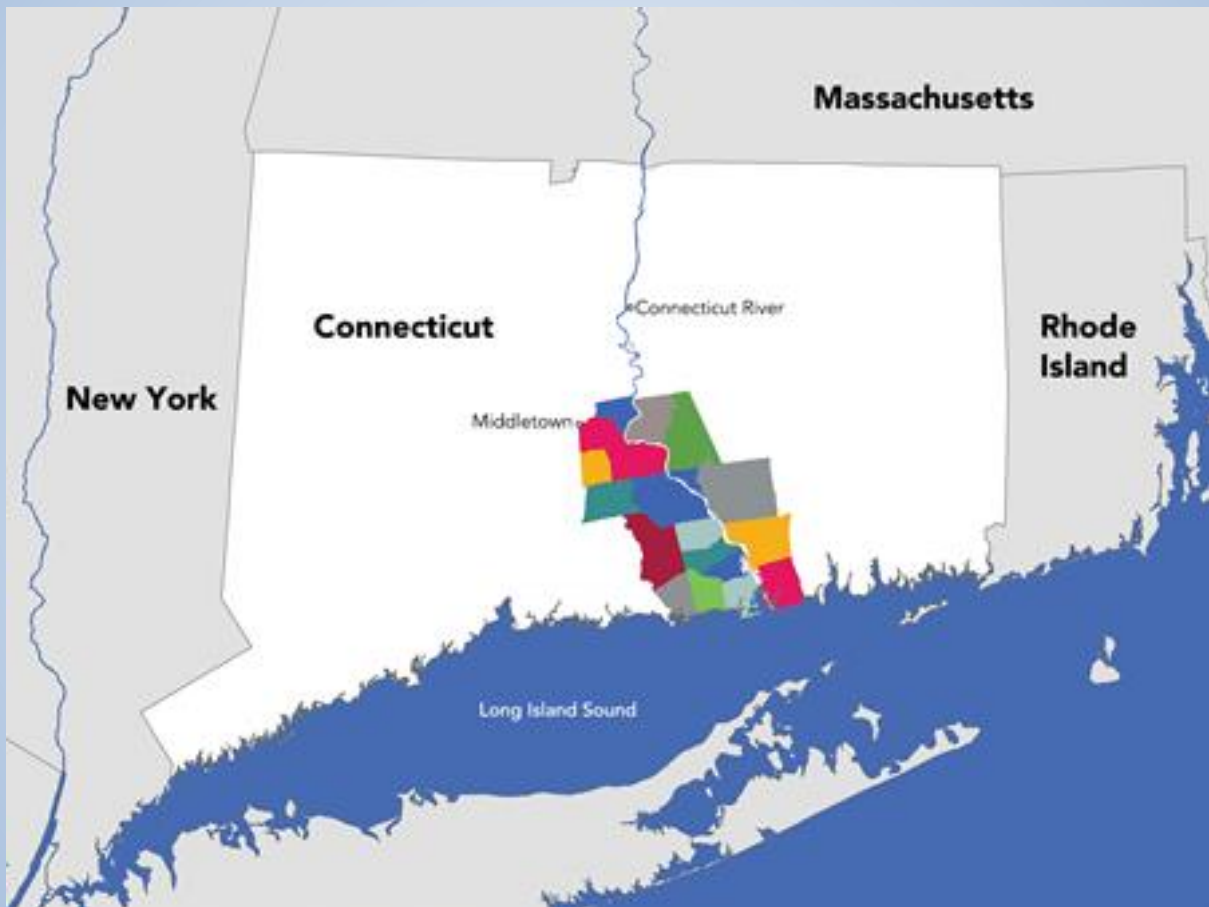


**FISCAL YEARS 2026-2027  
UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)  
FOR THE  
LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
Metropolitan Planning Organization**



**May 2025 – DRAFT**



**Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments**

145 Dennison Road Essex, CT 06426 | +1 860 581 8554 | [www.rivercog.org](http://www.rivercog.org)

**Metropolitan Planning Organization**

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## PROSPECTUS

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) defines the regionally agreed upon planning priorities and the roles and responsibilities of the various participants in the metropolitan planning process. The prospectus complements the annual work program and provides a narrative that outlines the region's anticipated transportation program and linkage to the many planning issues facing the RiverCOG's metropolitan area.

RiverCOG Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) encompasses seventeen municipalities with a combined 2020 Census population of 174,225 people and a land area of approximately 443 square miles. RiverCOG's MPO board is comprised of the seventeen Chief Elected Officials/Town Managers from the municipalities within the Lower Connecticut River Valley Region, a representative from the River Valley Transit, a representative from the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce representing business and freight interests and a non-voting representative from CTDOT

The forum for the cooperative decision making, regarding transportation planning, rests with this designated RiverCOG/MPO and is supported through assistance from RiverCOG staff, the River Valley Transit staff, and voluntary cooperation from planning staff from several of the member municipalities. The region partners with neighboring Councils of Governments (COGs) that serve as regional planning organizations and MPOs in Connecticut, CTDOT, FHWA and FTA in the delivery of planning and construction services to promote an interconnected statewide transportation network.

RiverCOG's neighboring COGs include: South Central Regional Council of Government (SCRCOG), the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG), and the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG). Each of these COGs hosts their own MPO. Together, these regions work cooperatively toward improving mutual transportation goals and improving connectivity for the New Haven Transportation Management Area (TMA), the Hartford Transportation Management Area (TMA), and the Southeastern Transportation Management Area (TMA). This includes bridging transportation networks within the Lower Connecticut River Valley Region; a region which connects the urbanized areas of Hartford, New Haven, and New London. RiverCOG works to facilitate long range, maintainable transportation management including: infrastructure improvements, maintenance, safety, environmental resource management and preservation, emergency management planning, land use analysis, economic growth, and capital planning.



Federal legislation governing the Metropolitan Planning process has been regulated by the 1991 enactment of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), the 1998 Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) of 2005, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP21) of 2012 and Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act or "FAST Act" of 2015. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (Public Law 117-58) continues to promote the role of Metropolitan Planning Organizations in long range transportation planning through FY 2026. These authorization acts are essential to the foundation of the Federal-aid highway programs. They also set forth the duties and functions of an agency or program, its organizational structure, and the responsibilities of agency or program officials including transforming the policy and programmatic framework for investments to guide the growth and development of the country's vital transportation infrastructure. Most authorization acts are multi-year acts that contain provisions for not only highway programs, but for other surface transportation modes, such as transit.

MPOs, outlining the planning requirements associated with the metropolitan planning process, are charged with numerous responsibilities such as the region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Other planning tasks include; congestion management, air quality, safety planning, transportation alternatives, system preservation, freight planning, homeland security, performance measures, broader based public participation/outreach efforts and inter-agency consultation and coordination.

The primary focus of RiverCOG's Unified Planning Work Program for Fiscal Years 2026-2027 will be to administer and implement the planning requirements of the MPO. Tasks will include designing and implementing new programs that address maximization of existing assets and mitigation of deficiencies identified in the 2023 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Work will include more comprehensive analysis for the next update to the MTP, a new Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), implementing recommendations in the Central CT Loop Trail Study, Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, Bus Integration Study, Regional Transportation Safety Plan, and Corridor studies. Another priority for 2026-2027 UPWP is the associated studies and research to support new programs such as Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) and the Thriving Communities Program (TCP). Research may include: demographic analysis, underserved population sectors, economic growth and valuation analysis, land use analysis, mapping, freight movement, environmental and conservation research, intermodal and transit analysis, land use patterns to ameliorate existing and future congestion, river and waterway transportation modes, travel demand, and other associated research. The research completed for this plan will be valuable for the next update of the region's transportation plan and other regional plans and studies.

The RiverCOG MPO is responsible for conducting the continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3-C) transportation planning process for the lower river valley metropolitan region in accordance with the metropolitan planning requirements of Section 134 (Title 23 U.S.C.) of the Federal Highway Act of 1962 and Section 8 of the Federal Transit Act.

The UPWP is developed bi-annually beginning in January or February and with a draft UPWP approved by the Council of Governments and the Metropolitan Planning Organization in May and is the result of continued cooperation among state (specifically transportation, air quality and planning divisions), local and other regional entities. The FY 2026 and 2027 UPWP was prepared with the involvement of these organizations, acting through the MPO for the RiverCOG region. The work tasks delineated in the 2026-2027 UPWP are performed primarily by RiverCOG staff with assistance as needed through voluntary

cooperation of the RiverCOG board members or their municipal staff, municipal commissions and in partnership with the River Valley Transit, and regional stakeholders such as: residents, representative groups of underserved populations, the Middlesex Chamber of Commerce and other regional Chambers of Commerce, Amtrak, and other public-private freight and transportation stakeholders.

## RIVERCOG STAFF

### **ADMINISTRATIVE**

#### **Executive Director**

The Executive Director provides lead management of the RiverCOG team, directs staff assistance to the RiverCOG board, and support to RiverCOG Committees as required. This person initiates and sets the overall RiverCOG work program, prioritizes general project development, and establishes draft budgets from year to year. This position also provides guidance and management of daily operations with staff, board and committee members, and the public. Due to RiverCOG's size, the Executive Director also conducts significant professional transportation planning tasks. Outside of RiverCOG, the Executive Director interacts and represents the region with other state COGs, and various State organizations and non-profits, and the Association of MPOs. The Executive Director also will provide technical expertise on various state boards and commissions such as Connecticut Legislative or Governor appointed committees and other statewide committees as required.

#### **Deputy Director**

The Deputy Director manages the day to day operation agency work program and provides professional planning support for the organization. This position acts as supervisory manager for the COGs planning programs including but not limited to: regional plan of conservation and development and associated projects and research, , general planning assistance for member municipalities, and technology development. Key transportation support functions include: assistance with development and review of the Regional Transportation Plan, transit and transit oriented development planning, public participation and outreach, municipal transportation project planning support, freight planning, intermodal planning, special plans and studies. This position also provides supervision to ensure integration of transportation planning into regional land use, environmental, and economic regional planning projects. This position also assists with municipal transportation projects, serves on or provides support to various state and regional committees as needed.

#### **Financial Administrator**

The Financial Administrator is a multi-tasked supervisory position within the agency which specializes in financial and human resource administration. This position is responsible for the financial administration of the agency and its associated committees and boards including RiverCOG. The tasks associated with this position include: coordination with staff on work program development and maintenance including, but not limited to budgeting, audit, billing, payments, payroll, support of agency personnel resources. This person may also be responsible for various planning support activities as determined by the Executive Director. Some of these duties may include: supervision of administrative support staff, editorial support, specialized transportation and agency financial reports, and budget programming for RiverCOG projects and liaison to state agencies including, but not limited to CTDOT financial services.

### **Financial Assistant**

The financial assistant performs clerical functions such as copying, scanning, sorting, filing, mailings, gathering documents for reports, contacting vendors and customers, and various as-needed tasks as directed by the Financial Administrator. Additional responsibilities include assisting with human resources and bookkeeping tasks: various HR tasks, accounts payable, payroll, bank reconciliations, etc.

### **Administrative Assistant**

The Administrative Assistant works within the agency to provide administrative support to the staff and for the various agency functions including equipment updates and maintenance, meeting minutes, public notification and outreach, correspondence, records maintenance, vendor interface, marketing and brochures, email and social media maintenance, and other administrative support for RiverCOG as determined by the Executive Director. The Administrative Assistant is responsible for setting up and supporting in-person, virtual, and hybrid meetings.

## ***SENIOR PLANNERS***

### **Senior Transportation Planner**

The Senior Transportation Planner serves as administrative support to the seventeen municipalities for RiverCOG and provides administrative backup to the Executive Director and the Deputy Director for transportation issues and programs. This supervisory position acts as the principal transportation planner for the region providing oversight of the day to day operations of the transportation planning programs and planner/advisor for specialized transportation programs including but not limited to: development of the UPWP, MTP, TIP, Certification Review Process, quarterly reports, budget, incident management, Title VI planning, congestion management, air quality, travel demand modeling, municipal support for local transportation projects, the LOTCIP program, STP-Urban programming, general transportation planning, and municipal referrals in the RiverCOG. This position acts as liaison to CTDOT and serves on various TMA committees, and other organizations as needed, and provides administrative support as needed.

### **Senior Environmental Planner**

The Senior Environmental Planner provides professional and supervisory support for the agency as project manager for environmental projects and environmental analysis in the realm of data compilation and analysis. This includes research on air quality improvement through research of transportation alternatives, Brownfield Programs, economic base integration with transportation modes, wildlife management planning for publicly accessible multi-modal recreational sites, including native plants and pollinator habitat corridors, invasive species (along navigable waters and other transportation vectors), land preservation, scenic roads and viewsheds, hydrology and storm water management, trails, greenways, non-vehicular transportation access, and riparian protection. Other responsibilities are oversight and support of the Title VI research and planning to promote access to underserved populations and updating the regional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan.

### **Senior Planner**

The Senior Planner serves as administrative support to the seventeen municipalities in the region for RiverCOG and provides back up to the Executive Director and the Deputy Director for agency projects and programs. This supervisory position acts as the municipal outreach coordinator for member town assistance requests, zoning issues, and municipal referrals in the RiverCOG. Responsibilities include:



inter-municipal referrals and reviews, including impacts from transportation issues, review of site plans and zoning regulations, including traffic circulations and impact. The Senior Planner works supporting emergency planning with CT DEMHS, including ESF 1 the transportation emergency support function. Another responsibility of this position is staff support to the CT River Gateway Commission and riverine, harbor and coastal transportation planning. Ancillary primary duties include: supervision of natural hazard mitigation planning, municipal harbor management planning, coastal resiliency for transportation and other capital infrastructure, planning and zoning consultation to municipal planning and zoning commissions, coastal grants manager (canoe trail maps, dock studies). An additional responsibility for this position includes developing new methods for public participation and outreach, specifically agency website development and updates, and social media innovation to promote government transparency through technology. This includes legislative testimony, cable access tv programming, and website outreach.

### ***REGIONAL PLANNERS***

#### **Regional Planners**

The Regional Planners within the agency provide support to the agency in the realm of census and statistical data collection and dissemination; research and planning for transportation projects, oversee planning and coordination of enhancement programs, agricultural and food freight and distribution systems, economic development support, development and implementation of bicycle and pedestrian plans and projects, housing projects, transportation asset inventory, assist with transit planning projects, LOTCIP coordination, preparation of CTDOT required reports, and other specialized transportation data collection, research, and planning as required. Other responsibilities of the position include but are not limited to geographic information systems (GIS), housing analysis, freight analysis, natural hazard mitigation, emergency management planning, administering the household hazardous waste facility, agriculture council support, data collection, research, public outreach, coordination of recycling programs, newsletters, media analysis, census data collection, and coordination with member municipalities.

#### **Community Planner**

The Community Planner works with the Regional Housing Committee and Lower Connecticut River Land Trust, Special regional projects, shared services project support, communications, municipal assistance, household hazardous waste coordination, and legislative tracking.

#### **Transit Planner**

The Transit Planner works staff, and associated boards, commissions, and committees the transit agencies. Responsibilities include working to create a system-wide redesign of routes, growing municipal membership, developing an implementation plan for electric buses, and other items from the 2020 Regional Transit Study as well as general transit planning, transit operations, land use, and regional planning, rider experience, marketing and collection/analysis, software that supports transit planning.

#### **GIS Planner**

The agency's primary geospatial (GIS) planner provides supervision and technical support for agency projects including: regional projects for technological innovation, mapping of transportation services; demographic data, grant implementation support; and coordination of interoperability of the region

with municipal geospatial databases. The GIS Planner also supports the agency's technology needs for a variety of planning projects.

### **Planner/Planning Intern**

The Planner/Planning Intern position is an entry level position within the agency and provides support to agency administrative and planning staff including but not limited to census and statistical data collection, research for transportation projects, traffic counts, economic development, freight analysis, bicycle and pedestrian plans and projects, housing, natural hazard mitigation, emergency management planning, agriculture council support, and underserved populations.

### ***CONSULTING PLANNERS-ENGINEERS-SPECIALISTS***

While RiverCOG completes much of the PL work in-house, the agency has provided for a direct cost estimate of \$50,000 to support planning and engineering analysis by potential consultants throughout FY26 and FY27. It is anticipated that there will be a need for support with outside consultants for special studies, updates to plans, and data collection, as part of the tasks Data Collection, Planning Activities and Other Technical Assistance, including but not limited to special studies, plan updates, and EcoInteractive SaaS solutions for TIP development. Table 1 shows a direct cost estimate of \$70,000 with the difference being non-consultant costs.

## **IMPORTANT ISSUES FOR FY 2026-2027**

Transportation infrastructure issues in the RiverCOG region are less financially complex than other densely populated urbanized areas in Connecticut. While the agency provides transportation support to the urbanized area of Middletown, much of the region is an ex-urban/rural where three urbanized areas meet, along major expressways and rail networks. That said, the agency works at integrating larger objectives into both regional and state goals to ensure environmental protection and community improvement through cohesive land use, transportation, economics, and design.

The objective is to plan for a cost effective, safe, and efficient system for all modes of transportation within the region. The primary focus for the region is coordinated access that is cost efficient, purposeful, provides for supportable land use, and enacts best management practices for non-motorized and motorized transportation improvements within the region. The overall goal is to integrate access for all modes of transportation to ensure quality of life for residents, enhanced mobility, hospitality, and ease of access for visitors, and community-oriented economic development.

Coordination of transportation improvements within the municipalities and region is paramount, including maintenance of existing transportation systems through exploration of road and bridge improvements, including expansion of options to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMTs), improvement of transit oriented development, and coordination of intermodal transportation as outlined within the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

### ***INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION***

Although the region is designated as an urban area, the relative location of town and city centers to one



another remains ex-urban for transportation planning purposes. With their geographic proximity on Interstate 95 and the Amtrak rail line, the region's shoreline towns are under increasing development pressure from expanded commercial and residential land development. Without a plan for strategic intermodal access, transit-oriented development, or non-motorized access, a larger percentage of land will be required to access development, mitigate traffic congestion, and improve safety for automobile transportation. Added impacts include: a decrease on efficiency of freight access, air pollution, impacts on wastewater options, degradation of public water supplies, and increased storm water impacts to the region's waterbodies, watercourses, coves and harbors.

While much of current transportation planning at the state and regional level could be described as system maintenance, RiverCOG works to identify issues and deficiencies and plan for the efficient and coordinated use of transportation funding at state, regional, and municipal levels. For instance, economic benefit and quality of life for the region can only be maximized through increased efficient use of transportation funds. Intermodal coordination of sidewalk construction, crosswalk placement, bikeways, commuter access to business and industry, transit-oriented development, preservation of greenways, preservation of rural road character for tourism, and dependable access for residents to transit options are all elements of a strategic transportation system that supports community vitality.

The need for alternative transportation and more efficient use of the automobile is expected to increase as limited resources for mobility are challenged. Intermodal planning and provision for alternatives with varied forms of transportation are currently limited with regard to funding and opportunities. The most immediate venue for improving intermodal coordination and improvements to the existing road system is through coordination with CTDOT. Another important intermodal goal is to continue the expansion of the popular public transit system for multiple users, college students, and commuters and support policy initiatives that promote transit options and associated land use. Infrastructure that promotes bicycle commuting corridors, and improved access to rail and commuter parking will be achieved once funding is obtained for preliminary and final design. While efforts have been made in the past to provide intermodal connections, improved inter-town and inter-regional transit options, creative land use and zoning, reduced VMTs and enhanced options for commuters are key objectives for the towns and the region.

### ***PUBLIC TRANSIT***

Two public bus systems (9 Town Transit and Middletown Area Transit) serving the RiverCOG region have merged under Estuary Transit District (ETD) and have started operating as a single bus company under the new name River Valley Transit (RVT). Passenger train service is provided by Amtrak and Shoreline East along the coastline. The MPO has worked closely with rail officials and public transit (bus service) boards and staff to promote expansion and opportunities for integrated access.

The region's transit system connects to New London in Southeastern Connecticut, the New Haven area, and Hartford area. The MPO works closely with River Valley Transit which is direct recipient of FTA funds. Support of public bus services and coordination of their operations is vital to a seamless public transit system in the seventeen municipality region. To increase efficiency in service and dependability, RiverCOG is working to implement recommendations of the bus integration study.

The AMTRAK Northeast Corridor service makes several stops daily at the Old Saybrook train station and there is ever expanding public bus transit service from the station to locations within the region.

Shoreline East Rail service with stops in Clinton, Westbrook, and Old Saybrook and connections to New Haven and New London offers additional opportunities for affordable travel (with connections) to New York City and Hartford / Springfield, MA. Continued expansion of commuter hour bus service by the Estuary Transit District to and from all three train stations is an opportunity to improve bus connections to Middletown for these Amtrak and Shoreline East riders. RiverCOG continues to advocate and plan for intermodal access to the region's train station and bus stops. A major initiative is planning and support with CTDOT districts for the installation of primary bus stop locations within the highway right of way, and construction of sidewalks with bus stop locations for accessibility.

There is very limited private taxi service and few Lyft and Uber drivers, and it is extremely difficult for anyone without access to a car, including travelers arriving by train, to travel within the region. A major initiative of the region is to study and identify ways to improve intermodal connections between transit, land use, and the region's economy, especially tourism. River Valley Transit provides additional connection opportunities in the region beyond fixed route bus service. RVT provides an advance reservation-based curb-to-curb shuttle service called Dial-a-Ride for 16 towns in the region. RVT also has a new on-demand micro transit service called XtraMile that provides public transportation on-demand similar to ride sharing apps such as Uber or Lyft in Old Saybrook and portions of Westbrook, Essex, Middletown and East Hampton. Non-emergency medical transportation is another issue for the region. Many residents especially seniors are unable to access key non-emergency medical appointments if they don't have reliable access to transportation. This need is especially apparent in the senior population who often are not able to drive and may not have friends or family to take them to medical appointments. While the transit district provides services to many parts in the region, for residents who need to access medical appointments outside of the region, travel becomes very difficult.

### ***BICYCLE – PEDESTRIAN***

Currently, safe bicycle and pedestrian routing is limited and is not fully coordinated with the existing transit system or town center development. RiverCOG is continuing to work on implementing recommendations in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

### ***TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT***

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) are areas near transit hubs that include some utility infrastructure which can support the TOD supporting densities. RiverCOG also has designated areas that are described as Transit Friendly Development (TFD) which are important for their proximity to transit facilities or town centers but have decentralized or private wastewater infrastructure which limits the density. Both land use and transportation models improve access to transit service and its associated benefits. The MPO works with municipalities on regional and CTDOT initiatives for TOD in the region. A Thriving Communities Program grant application to study TOD options at the region's three train stations and transit was awarded in 24/25 and implementation of recommendations will begin in FY 2026 and 2027.

### ***AIRPORTS***

RiverCOG participates as a regional stakeholder for the Connecticut Aviation Authority. The region has two privately owned airports and several landing pads for helicopters. Connecticut's airports are a critical function of passenger and on-time freight movement. Through its continued participation with

CT Aviation Authority (CAA), CTDOT and other stakeholders, RiverCOG will support improvements to passenger connections to major CT airports, including transit service. Transit service options to T.F. Green Airport, Bradley Airport and increasingly New Haven Tweed Airport, are important air link for the RiverCOG region.

## ***ROADS***

Throughout the region, as indicated by surveys, local plans of conservation and development, and public comments at land use development hearings, there is a general concern that improvements to existing roadways be done in a manner that is context-sensitive, which includes accessible town centers and accommodation for travel modes other than automobiles. The residents of the RiverCOG region have come to rely on the scenic character and natural resources of this region as a source of economic development, maintenance of property values, and job development. There is strong support for maintaining the viability of town and city centers. To that end, there continues to be considerable interest in future road improvements to minimize road congestion, find methods to improve the interconnectivity of the road network, focus freight movement to logical corridors, improve bicycle and pedestrian access, improve safety for all travel modes, and minimize those land use scenarios and road conditions that require road expansion or widening.

Movement within the region is largely accomplished by private motor vehicles on local and state roads. The existing road system functions well for motorized vehicles with some exceptions. Seasonally, heavy traffic will result in congestion along the major collector routes throughout the region. North-south routes such as State Routes 9, 17, 81, 154, and 156, and the major east-west corridor, U.S. Route 1 (Boston Post Road) from Old Lyme to Clinton, experience significant congestion during the summer with seasonal heavy volume as visitors and residents access the shoreline and associated state, town and local beaches, summer cottages, and other seasonal attractions.

Frequent accidents on I-95 result in backups on both U.S. Route 1 and I-95. Route 9 in Middletown is a focal area for continued research and solution based improvements for safety and operability. State Routes 68, 17, 77, and 79 connecting Middletown to Interstate 91 to New Haven/Hartford and Interstate 95 and the shoreline consistently experience high year round and seasonal volumes for commuter traffic. This affects the functionality of the town centers along those routes, specifically Durham's town center, which is at the apex of Routes 17, 68, 77 and 79. A similar dynamic is located in Essex where Route 153, 154, 80, and 9 intersect on a major commuter route. Route 66 on the east side of the Connecticut River connects East Hampton and Portland town centers and parts of East Haddam and Haddam with Routes 2 and 9 and Interstate 91. This commuter route has a high volume of traffic and travel speeds which require consideration for future safety improvements.

As noted in the intermodal section, the need to adapt existing roads to improve intermodal efficiency (transit, biking, employment, safety) is a primary goal in the region. Incorporating the concept of "complete streets" on some of the primary collectors in town centers is an important initiative within the Long-Range Transportation Plan. Optimizing travel modes and land use patterns in each town center is important for town center economic vitality and livability. Vibrant and accessible town centers can be easily linked through transit expansion to each other and to employment sectors in urbanized areas. Road design to accommodate travel speeds and congestion has limiting options: cost, maintenance, and livability. One goal is to integrate complete street designs into local and regional land use policies. Another target initiative includes planning for efficient use and maintenance of the existing

regional road network in conjunction with rail and transit access and improved incident management for the portion of Route 9 and I-95 which is within the RiverCOG region.

The focus for the existing road system is to identify a performance management system for maintenance and safety improvements that will provide ongoing analysis and data for regional and CTDOT funding for cost effective road maintenance.

### ***COMPLETE STREETS***

RiverCOG's plans and projects support a transportation network that prioritize safety, and connectivity to destinations for all people who use the street network regardless of mode. This includes providing for an equitable and safe transportation network for users of all ages and abilities, including those from marginalized communities. Each complete street is unique and developed to best serve its community context and primary role in the network.

Complete streets planning is incorporated in project specific programs such as STP, TAP, LOTCIP, TRIP, Community Connectivity and other programs where bicycle and pedestrian needs are analyzed at the project level. It is also analyzed in other programs such as DEEPs Recreational Trails Program and OPMs Small Town Economic Assistance Program, NPSs Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program and FHWA's Federal Lands Access Program.

Complete Streets planning is also incorporated into MPO transportation plans such as the MTP, Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, Transit Integration Study, Central Connecticut Loop Trail Study, corridor studies, road safety audits, as well as other COG plans such as the RPOCD and Regional Housing Plan and state plans such as the Strategic Highway Safety Plan and Active Transportation plans which are developed with input from the COGs. The RiverCOG SS4A and TCP projects also include significant complete streets components. These programs and others may use complete streets funding.

### ***FREIGHT***

Freight planning in the region is targeted toward both enhancement of pass through freight via major arterials such as I-95, I-91, Route 9 and via rail and river. RiverCOG will focus on research and analysis to support the statewide freight plan. RiverCOG is also a part of the Metropolitan Area Planning (MAP) Forum through NYMTC to better coordinate planning activities in the multi-state metropolitan region including freight.

The Valley Railroad Corridor Freight Analysis examined rail freight movements within the region in context with this under-utilized corridor to evaluate the benefits derived by upgrading the rail line to accommodate rail freight traffic and the impact to potential passenger rail, existing tourism rail, and the general region economy. The region will work in close cooperation and participate in CTDOT's data collection to ensure efficiency of data collection efforts. RiverCOG may perform an in-house freight analysis based on the statewide freight plan. Attending workshops on freight planning and integrating those techniques into the region's planning is a priority for the region. Also, the region will be analyzing

land use regulations, site plan and road design as well as bridge height and capacity which can either hinder or expedite movement of freight.

### ***ECONOMIC VITALITY, LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENT***

RiverCOG's transportation planning program incorporates land use, economic, and environmental scenario planning into all transportation planning within the RiverCOG region and in partnership with neighboring regions and the CTDOT. To ensure global competitiveness and retention of economic values and workforce within the region and Connecticut, the region recognizes the integrated importance of transportation modality and its coordination with land use and environmental planning. The functionality of transportation for future land use and environmental scenarios is critical to the overall economic vitality of the region and the State of Connecticut.

A goal for RiverCOG over the next two years is to more closely examine local and regional planning, and conservation and development land use policies, to identify best practices for zoning regulations, climate adaptation, building codes, and public work policies that can work to enhance the viability of the region's transportation network. Through RiverCOG's work with the "Shoreline Basic Needs Task Force" and other regional housing groups, an important work item in the next two years includes incorporating strategies from the Regional Housing Plan especially along transit corridors and in low income areas. Brownfield or Greyfield land is defined as economically obsolescent, outdated, failing, moribund or underused real estate assets or land. This data will be used to update the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development (RPOCD)

Over 2026 and 2027, RiverCOG will continue to incorporate transportation planning into the writing of other regional studies. Additionally, the region's updated comprehensive conservation plan identifies methods for mitigating transportation impacts on wildlife corridors, forest fragmentation, and water quality. RiverCOG's wildlife and water resources are an ecological asset for Connecticut. RiverCOG will provide transportation data and staff support for implementing recommendations from GrowSmart and the region's new Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

### ***TRANSPORTATION SAFETY AND SECURITY***

A continuing emphasis within the region is on transportation safety and evacuation preparedness. This work is done in conjunction with SCCROG to foster advancements in planning for homeland security concerns and disaster preparedness for DEMHS – Region 2. In addition, RiverCOG continues to explore options for improved incident management and anticipates a regional I-95 incident management team similar to the Hartford TIM Coalition, to address emergency access, safety, and congestion on Interstate 95

### ***OTHER TRANSPORTATION***

Some of the other matters to be addressed in fiscal years 2026 and 2027 include the following: refining the implementation of Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) strategies along major corridors, deployment of incident management strategies for arterials, continued research and mapping of the most current data to identify and meet demographic program needs, development and maintenance of

the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), coordination as necessary on the State (Air Quality) Implementation Plan, and RiverCOG's participation in Congestion Management strategic planning in cooperation with South Central Regional Council of Governments and Capitol Region Council of Governments. Most important, transportation planning is achieved through collaboration, relationships, and coordination. In addition to its continued affiliation with FHWA, FTA, CTDOT, and other Connecticut & New England regional planning organizations, RiverCOG will continue to work in partnership with the Connecticut Aviation Authority, the U.S. Coast Guard, CTDESPP, CTDEEP, CTOPM, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, CCAPA, CCM, COST, and other associated state, regional and local entities to optimize and improve the region and state's transportation and land use network.

Continuing projects include: coordinate the goals of an evolving transportation/tourism plan to identify transit access for tourism, Connecticut River Heritage Trails Greenway Development, staff support for the RiverCOG bike/ped committee, coordination with the Valley Railroad, mapping and analyzing areas at Brownfields or Greyfields near transit stations or stops, upgrades to the agency website, and a regional complete streets plan. RiverCOG will also provide continuing assistance to member towns on transportation issues, including access to transportation funding, freight rail planning, integrated access management, complete streets planning, participation in regional commuter bikeways, agriculture and natural resource planning, long range transportation planning, trail development, marine and rail, transportation implications of new regulations or development, and scenic road designation.

### **PLANS AND STUDIES**

*Central Connecticut Loop Trail (CCLT) Study Implementation (\$465,000, legislative/Middletown FY26/27)*

Begin Design of priority recommendations from the CCLT Study

*Central Connecticut Loop Trail (CCLT) Study Implementation (\$2,000,000, legislative/RiverCOG FY26/27)*

Begin construction of priority recommendations from the CCLT Study or leverage for a larger BUILD grant project

*SS4A Study (\$300,000, FHWA, FY26/27 continued from FY24/25)*

Complete a SS4A Comprehensive Safety Action Plan developing programs and projects towards a Vision Zero goal for the region.

### **PLANNING GOALS**

RiverCOG will continue and expand upon several existing transportation planning activities that integrate federal requirements under the IIJA.

Current federal legislation, 23usc134(h)(1) and 49usc5303(h)(1), identifies ten planning factors that Metropolitan Planning Organizations must consider in their planning process. These planning goals are identified below.



1. **ECONOMIC VITALITY.** Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.
2. **SAFETY.** Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
3. **SECURITY.** Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
4. **MOBILITY.** Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and freight.
5. **ENVIRONMENT & PLANNING.** Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
6. **SYSTEM INTEGRATION.** Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.
7. **SYSTEM MANAGEMENT.** Promote efficient system management and operation.
8. **SYSTEM PRESERVATION.** Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.
9. **RESILIENCY.** Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation.
10. **TRAVEL.** Enhance travel and tourism.

In addition, MAP 21 outlined seven national goals, 23usc150(b), and the FAST Act requires MPOs promote a performance based approach to transportation planning and States must coordinate, to the maximum extent practical, with relevant MPOs in selecting a target to ensure for consistency. MPOs must coordinate, to the maximum extent practical, with the relevant States in selecting a target to ensure consistency. Coordination required with public transportation providers is important and States and MPOs must integrate other performance plans into the performance-based process. The seven goals include:

1. **Safety** – to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads
2. **Infrastructure Condition** – to maintain the highway infrastructure asset system in a state of good repair
3. **Congestion Reduction** – to achieve a significant reduction in congestion on the National Highway System
4. **System Reliability** – to improve the efficiency of the surface transportation system
5. **Freight Movement and Economic Vitality** – to improve the national freight network, strengthen the ability of rural communities to access the national and international trade markets, and support regional economic development
6. **Environment** – to enhance the performance of the transportation system while protecting and enhancing the environment
7. **Reduced Project Delivery Delays** – to reduce project costs, promote jobs and the economy, and expedite the movement of people and goods by accelerating project completion through elimination delays in the project development and delivery process, including reducing regulatory burdens and improving agencies' work practices

RiverCOGs Regional Plan of Conservation and Development, incorporates many of the goals and objectives of the MTP and requirements federal transportation planning legislation. RiverCOG has a history of practice in integrating environmental, economic, and social values, land use and transportation into a regionally planning context for 536. We will produce new recommendations based on current data, research, and best planning practices into the long-range planning efforts for the seventeen

municipality region. To provide a high level of public outreach and input, a series of meetings have been held during the preparation of plans such as the RPOCD, Regional Housing Plan, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), Central Connecticut Loop Trail Study, as well as the MTP, Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, Regional Transportation Safety Plan, Bus Integration Study and corridor / roadway studies. These plans incorporate long-range transportation goals and objectives to educate the public and stakeholders on best management planning for transportation. Mobility and “Ladders of Opportunity” for the region’s population are another ongoing practice for RiverCOG and a key goal of any transportation solution promoted by RiverCOG. The region continues to find ways to provide intermodal access to key service and education sectors for advancement and opportunity. RiverCOG is also partnered with SCCROG in the effective use and support of regional Mobility Manager program to identify gaps in transit service for underserved and disadvantaged populations.

The proposed work program elements respond to the planning goals noted above. In addition, the MPO will also incorporate the tasks below, performance base planning, strategic economic growth and vitality, modeling of existing and future land use scenarios and environmental planning with transportation models, continued advocacy for safety improvements, security, and integration of all transportation modes. It will also help provide consistency of the MTP in relation to state and local development.

## TRANSPORTATION AND INTEGRATION OF PLANNING OBJECTIVES

### **Task 1:      *MANAGEMENT OF THE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS***

**Staff & Task Management:** RiverCOG will manage, staff, and program resources in a manner appropriate to ensure all tasks in the work program are completed in accordance with the work task descriptions contained in the UPWP, in accordance with FHWA and FTA regulations, and in accordance with any third-party contracts executed by RiverCOG. RiverCOG will also assure that proper reports on program progress and financial status are provided to all funding agencies.

**Budgeting:** RiverCOG has established fiscal and management procedures to integrate RiverCOG’s UPWP activity into RiverCOG’s overall budget, accounting, and program processes.

**Audits:** RiverCOG engages an independent Certified Public Accountant to prepare an annual audit. It is delivered to CTDOT for its review and approval. This audit shall be performed in accordance with OMB Circular A-128, Audits of State and Local Governments. MPO Certification Review: RiverCOG will continue to modify the work programs and deliverables to maintain positive conclusions and recommended practices and deliverables as listed in MPO certification reviews. Anticipated Dates for Completion of Products is noted in the timeline.

Products	Timeline
1. Unified Planning Work Program	MAY 2027
2. DOT-RiverCOG Agreement	JUNE 2027
3. Quarterly program progress reports	

	(Including Title VI activity report)	OCT/JAN/APR/JULY FY 26/27
4.	Audit reports for FHWA, FTA, and CTDOT funded projects.	FY 26/27
5.	Updates to information and data for Title VI	FY 26/27
6.	Coordinate and work on cooperative planning structure with New Haven and Hartford TMA to streamline CTDOT capital planning and project coordination.	FY 26/26
7.	Implement and periodically review Affirmative Action Plan	FY 26/27

## **TASK 2: DATA COLLECTION/ANALYSIS**

### **A. GENERAL COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS**

Develop and maintain demographic and transportation databases and migration into a regional database for travel forecast and land use models, congestion management, air quality and other associated federal requirements. RiverCOG, in cooperation with neighboring MPOs, transit districts, and consultants, will assist CTDOT in the updating of databases. This includes maintenance, improvement, and expansion of a regional geographic information system to support other transportation planning activities. Maintain other transportation data that supports transportation planning activities of RiverCOG and other agencies including, but not limited to; RVT, SCRCOG, SCCOG, CRCOG, and the Chambers of Commerce. Mapping as referenced in this document includes: creation and updates to geospatial database and fields for specific information as well as representative maps for planning documents and depiction of information. Data collected is used to identify growth corridors and analyze transportation improvements promoting consistency of the MTP and proposed transportation programs and improvements with state and local land and infrastructure development patterns.

### **Major Activities For FY 2026/2027**

- Continued update of current demographic analysis for region transportation objectives, economic growth forecasting, land use analysis and methods for forecasting growth in population, households, and employment by town for underserved populations as well as general population.
- Research and analyze data for future updates to RiverCOG's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- Develop land use forecasting methods for the region. Develop improved methods for allocating forecasted growth in population, households, and employment, including possible build out analysis for region.
- Develop and advance data sharing principles for the efficient use of resources and improved policy and decision making between the state, MPOs and transit providers
- Identify and map areas for transit-oriented housing, specifically opportunities for affordable housing. This also includes Brownfield or Greyfield areas that could potentially be reclaimed for housing near rail stations or bus stops.

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- Other Data. Collect other data for CTDOT and others as needed. (example: HPMS, 536 Report, commuter lot counts, bridge data, crash locations, traffic counts, etc.)
- Review and update new geospatial data base for regional bridges and overpasses (height – weight – width) and road ROW restrictions.
- Monitor and mapping of maritime traffic database for lower Connecticut River and shoreline towns as needed for harbor management planning and marinas.
- Mapping and monitoring of invasive species in navigable waters.
- Mapping and analysis of forestation and natural resources.
- Collection of data for stormwater management as it relates to regional highway and roads.
- Analysis of road data and transit data for transportation planning programs and projects. Collection and analysis of freight data and stakeholders.
- Create a database and mapping for regional trail system including intermodal connection with existing transportation systems.
- Mapping and data collection for underserved populations, health and assistance service centers, foodbanks, agriculture commodities and distribution.
- Mapping and analysis of economic data, business sectors, freight distribution, and small business locations.
- Develop a geospatial database and map tourism within the region.
- Develop and advance data sharing principles for more efficient use of resources and enhanced policies and decision making.

Anticipated Dates for Completion of Products is noted in the timeline

Products	Timeline
1. Maintenance and updates to (GIS) Parcel and database	FY 26/27
2. Continue updates of website with current data/maps	FY 26/27
3. Update regional demographic database	FY 26/27
4. Bicycle and pedestrian data support to member municipalities as required	FY 26/27
5. Trail mapping and database for intermodal connection with existing transportation modes	FY 26/27
6. Monitor maritime traffic database including CT River Ferry statistics	FY 26/27
7. Work with CTDOT on data for STP, LOTCIP, TIP/STIP, ACQ determinations, capital planning, etc.	FY 26/27
8. Monitor and mapping of invasive species	FY 26/27
9. Data collection associated with development of plans	

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	and studies	FY 26/27
10.	Mapping and data collection – regional housing, soils Greyfields, Brownfields, and utility infrastructure	FY 26/27
11.	Transit operations analysis and data collection	FY 26/26
12.	Transit capital analysis data collection	FY 26/27
13.	Regional roads condition survey and database	FY 26/27
14.	Create and maintain geospatial database related to Title VI populations and associated services	FY 26/27
15.	Create geospatial database for economic and agriculture business in the region and map	FY 26/27
16.	Develop a geospatial database and map tourism assets within the region	FY 26/27

### B. TRAFFIC, CONGESTION, AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT

#### Objectives

To manage traffic congestion and increase safety within the RiverCOG region for traffic which is caused or influenced by traffic congestion out from New Haven, Hartford, and other urbanized areas for commuters and/or from seasonal increases. By cooperating with the New Haven and Hartford MPOs, and in the coordination of congestion management within the New Haven TMA and the Hartford TMA, this larger regional area should be able to make significant inroads into congestion management and traffic safety. RiverCOG, in cooperation with its DEMHS and regional partners and transit providers will also work on transportation planning for emergency response in coordination with the other COGs, DEMHS, and CTDOT to move toward increased mobility and coordination during a regional or statewide incident, emergency, or catastrophic event.

#### Major Activities For FY 2026/2027

- Analyze and compile information on existing congestion and safety management
- Evaluate and participate in municipal committees to analyze identified traffic intersection of significance for congestion and safety concerns on state and local roads
- Research improved methods for traffic counts and purchase supplies as needed
- Continue to staff and support inter-agency and municipal coordination for improvements for congestion on the region's interstates and expressways
- Monitor inter-regional traffic and congestion. Monitor and evaluate transportation system performance for regional land use changes within context of updated regional and local land use plans to better evaluate influences on traffic congestion and access within the region. The system will include: the freeway system, the arterial system, and the local road system
- Coordinate with CTDOT on planning efforts for on-going incident management activities, and ITS planning
- Coordinate with CTDOT on development of regional goals for transportation system and performance measures

- Coordinate with CTDOT on the development of highway and transit management and operations strategies to promote increase safety and mobility
- Coordinate with South Central Council of Governments and Capitol Region Council of Governments for projects and data collection in the areas of transit, Congestion Management Process (CMP) and Air Quality Conformity, and Safety/Operations/ Management Strategies
  - Determine the CMP network in the region: highway and transit
  - Define regional congestion in context with State CMP: both the parameters to be measured and thresholds
  - Identify congested links using collected data
  - Develop strategies to address congested links: geometric, operational and travel demand management
  - Implement short- and long-term strategies through the MTP and TIP process
  - Monitor, collect and assess data to determine improvements
  - Share traffic data with CTDOTs traffic analysis unit
- Identify and map areas where traffic congestion and speed is a problem on local roads and intersections for vehicles but also bicyclists, and pedestrians
- Continue process of identifying thresholds on major arterials for CMP for medium to major traffic generators
- Work with other COGs/CTDOT on implementation of the Statewide Active Transportation Plan
- Work with other COGs/CTDOT on implementation of the Statewide Freight Plan
- Collect data on river usage and conditions for use including, freight, ferry traffic, recreational tourism, recreational boaters, and dockage
- Analysis of existing traffic and commuting patterns intra-region for regional planning and regulatory land use analysis
- Assist in coordination where appropriate with CTDOT on statewide CMP
- Continued planning for rail parking improvements and transit options for commuters for future TOD land use in the region
- Work with the DEMHS Region 2 and 3 Regional Emergency Planning Team (REPT) to plan for coordination and response for transportation support in the event of a regional or statewide emergency
- Work with CTDEEP and CTDOT with regards to electric vehicle charging infrastructure projects and programs



Anticipated Dates for Completion of Products is noted in the timeline

Products	Timeline
1. Report on region traffic monitoring and system for coordination with land use and development best practice	FY 26/27
2. Assist SCRCOG, CRCOG and CTDOT with Congestion Management Process	FY 26/27
3. Traffic counts for local roads within seventeen municipalities and provide to CTDOT as completed	FY 26/27
4. Updated commuter lot counts within region	FEB/MAY/AUG/NOV 26/27
5. Review of Bridge Program within region and repairs	FY 26/27
6. DEMHS REPT (Steering Committee and ESF 1)	FY 26/27
7. Assistance to CTDOT with FHWA 536 reports, local finance reports, and performance reporting	FY 26/27

### **TASK 3: PLANNING ACTIVITIES**

#### **A. LONG RANGE PLANNING**

##### **Objectives**

RiverCOG in cooperation with other regional partners, the transit districts, member municipalities, local municipal planners, and consulting planners will encourage the development of efficient multi-modal transportation systems that will provide lower cost transportation alternatives and increase mobility of people and goods within the RiverCOG region, conserve resources, provide for accessible and safe solutions, lower energy consumption, and reduce air pollution. Identification of performance measures as noted in MAP 21 and the FAST Act in coordination with CTDOT is a priority with long range programming. Many of the long-range activities including freight analysis, conservation plan development, and plan implementation are carry overs from prior UPWPs. Those planning items within the documents listed as ONGOING are generally carry overs from the prior UPWP.

##### **Major Activities For FY 2026/2027**

- \* In cooperation with the transit district, partners at CTDOT, FHWA, FTA, and neighboring regions, RiverCOG will continue to implement recommendations in the 2023 MTP for the RiverCOG region. A transportation engineer and/or planning consultant may be selected to assist with this process to help identify and process projects listed in the 2023 MTP.
- \* Region Freight Study and Analysis – collect data and perform analysis on freight movement and potential improvements to the freight system including freight generators, stakeholder list, constraints, truck parking facilities, GIS data, and other factors. A transportation consultant may be selected to assist with this study.
- \* Implement projects in the RiverCOG Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- \* Coordination with transportation planning with recommendations in the Regional Conservation Plan

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- \* Development of future Corridor Improvement Studies and Plans
- \* Development of future Transit Improvement Studies and Plans
- \* Conduct further planning for the portion of the Central Connecticut Loop Trail in the region
- \* Develop Programmatic Mitigation Plans to address potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects as needed or coordinate with the State to do so.
- \* Coordination with state and local entities to improve the overall resiliency and reliability of the transportation network including but not limited to extreme storm events
- \* Coordination of the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development
- \* Coordination with the LCRV Regional Housing Plan, LCRV Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and other RiverCOG Planning initiatives
- \* Coordination of complete streets initiatives in transportation and other plans that create a network of active transportation facilities, Integrate or improve active transportation facilities with public transportation service, create multiuse active transportation infrastructure facilities making connections within or between communities, and develop plans and policies supporting TOD.
- \* Develop a complete streets prioritization plan that identifies a specific list of complete streets projects to improve the safety, mobility, or accessibility of a street
- \* Develop new MOUs with neighboring COGs to facilitate coordinated planning and funding activities and assure that the updates of the transportation plans are coordinated.
- \* Coordinate with the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection on the development of the State Plan for air quality and improvement to freight movements
- \* Lead implementation of Route 1 recommendations from Route 1 Corridor Study
- \* Lead implementation of Route 81 recommendations from Route 81 Corridor Study
- \* Lead implementation of Route 66 recommendations from Route 66 Corridor Study
- \* Lead implementation of Bus system improvements from the Bus Integration Study
- \* Lead implementation of CCLT improvements from the CCLT Study
- \* Lead implementation of safety improvements from the SS4A Comprehensive Safety Action Plan
- \* Lead implementation of TOD from the Thriving Communities TOD Plans
- \* Coordinate with Valley Railroad Company on a long-range plan for use of the corridor as determined by research and cost benefit analysis and links toward intermodal connections with the VRR tourism train.
- \* Work with CTDOT in the program/project design process in relation to planning and environmental linkages (PEL) to identify transportation issues with environmental concerns along corridors and for specific projects.

Anticipated Dates for Completion of Products is noted in the timeline

Products	Timeline
1. Adopt 27 MTP	March 2027
2. Regional Freight Analysis	FY 26/27
3. Corridor Study Improvements	FY 26/27
4. Bike/Ped Master Plan Improvements	FY 26/27
5. Safety Plan Improvements	FY 26/27
6. Transit Integration Study Improvements	FY 26/27
7. Engineering or Planning Consultant support services (LOTICIP, RTP, Corridor or Complete Streets, as needed)	FY 26/27
8. Complete Streets Prioritization Plan	FY 26/27
9. Implementation of Regional Conservation Plan	FY 26/27
10. Implementation of Regional Housing Plan, TOD PLAN and CEDS	FY 26/27
11. Long range plan with Valley Railroad, CTDEEP & CTDOT	FY 26/27
12. Greenway and Scenic Road Designations	FY 26/27
13. Support and development of a Tourism-Transportation Plan	FY 26/27
14. Recreational Trails Project planning and projects	FY 26/27

## B. TRANSIT PLANNING

### Objectives

To develop and maintain cost effective coordinated public transit services suitable to the needs of the region, and expand opportunities for ridership from new sources such as commuters, college students, and general population on public bus and rail to reduce VMTs and provide lower cost options to automobile use. This would include a comprehensive operations analysis and planning for new facilities to improved accessibility of riders: bike racks, bus shelters, rescue vehicle/options for motorized wheelchairs, improved transfer points, coordination, and routing to accommodate commuters.

### Major Activities For FY 2026/2027

RiverCOG will work with the various regional and state transit providers to be actively involved in state efforts to evaluate the feasibility of using public transit to alleviate congestion on the I-95 corridor and other state routes. The region will also provide expanded service within the region to address various needs as follows:

- Continue work on transit-oriented development or transit friendly development with an emphasis on affordable housing options, incentive housing zoning, and decentralized utility infrastructure to support optimal density
- Direct planning support to provide increased ridership, improvement of identified gaps, and cost efficiency in linkages between the region, adjacent urbanized areas and employment centers and facilitate transportation between Amtrak, Shoreline East stations, and the surrounding area.

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- Assist in the coordination of local transit services specifically related to federal and state welfare reform and access to jobs initiatives, specifically Welfare to Work initiatives through the Regional Growth Connection, Governor Service Initiative, and Workforce Development.
- Assist the River Valley Transit to integrate human services transportation coordination with Federal requirements such as: Municipal Grant Program (MGP), 5310 program, Mobility Management, and other transit programs to improve inter/intra-regional and paratransit services.
- Work with New Haven TMA and the associated transit districts toward continued implementation of Mobility Manager for the region
- Work with New Haven and Hartford TMAs and CTDOT on planning for Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation.
- Review and update policies as needed to assure compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Transit planning support for the RVT, rail services, with emphasis on identification of rail parking needs and rail/local transit interface improvements.
- Analysis and planning for bus stops, signage and shelters to improved coordination of inter-regional transit services, including paratransit and coordination with local road improvements.
- Planning support to analyze bus/rail interface improvements, improvements to bus stops, shelters, and signage and improved security
- Planning support to analyze connectivity between modes, population centers and first/last mile connections
- Improved coordination of inter-regional and intra-regional transit and paratransit services
- Identify areas, including reclaimed brownfields, in the vicinity of existing and proposed rail and busway stations and along potential future public transit corridors that may be suitable for the construction of affordable housing.
- Promote safe, livable communities and the environment using the INVEST within the MTP and/or project selection processes when applicable.
- Implement new proposed route and service changes across the RVT system
- Implement fare policy changes including reduced fare for low-income riders to improve affordability for vulnerable riders
- Transition from flag-stop based to a stop-based bus system. This will require creating a master stop list and installation of signs
- Introduce new XtraMile on-demand micro transit projects, if additional funding is available

Anticipated Dates for Completion of Products is noted in the timeline

**Products****Timeline**

- |    |  |          |
|----|--|----------|
| 1. | Continue GIS mapping and routing of transit routing of transit buses and shelters to enhance operations, service improvements, and Title VI requirements | FY26/27  |
| 2. | Transit ridership counts   | FY 26/27 |
| 3. | Continue support of grant applications for MGP and CMAQ  | FY 26/27 |
| 4. | Coordinated transit planning for New Haven TMA and Hartford TMA  | FY 26/27 |
| 5. | Transit Integration Study Improvements   | FY 26/27 |
| 6. | Implement Comprehensive Transit Integration Study  | FY 26/27 |
| 7. | TOD Analysis (Infrastructure and Housing)  | FY 26/27 |

**C. SHORT RANGE PLANNING****Objectives**

To develop a program and schedule of transportation improvements projects for RiverCOG region with the goal of system preservation and efficient use of transportation funds to move toward long range goals. Preservation of both the highway and transit networks is a key operational factor in preserving and improving the existing transportation system. Monitoring performance measure in coordination with CTDOT is a priority with programming.

**Major Activities For FY 2026/2027**

- \* **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** – develop and amend as needed the Regional TIP including a priority list of projects to be carried out in each federal funding program ideally on a two-year cycle. RiverCOG will also work toward implementation of projects listed in the STIP to the extent feasible through funding mechanisms for each project.
- \* **STP-Urban Program**- coordinate with CTDOT on the implementation of the STP-Urban Program and link town activities with the state.
- \* **Memorandums of Understanding** - coordinate with other MPOs in the New Haven and Hartford Urbanized Area to promote collaborative use of funding and identify coordinated planning process and products such as plans, programs, corridor studies, and projects across adjacent MPO and State boundaries; and/or collaboration among State DOT(s), MPOs, and operators of public transportation on activities such as: data collection, data storage and analysis, analytical tools, and performance based planning, and review Agreements based on revised UZA/TMA boundaries.
- \* **Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP – 100% state funded)** – identify and program regionally significant projects for member towns through RTP and other regional studies. On- call engineering assistance may be warranted to evaluate project readiness. RiverCOG may hire an on-call engineer through an RFQ process. LOTICIP tasks are typically funded with 100% state funds, but eligible activities are listed in CTDOTs 'Handbook for Councils of Governments and Metropolitan Planning Organizations'. LOTICIP funds are used for program

administration, application review and prioritization and design review, whereas other related activities are eligible under PL.

- \* **Transportation Rural Improvement Program (TRIP)** - identify and program regionally significant projects for member towns through RTP and other regional studies.
- \* **Corridor Study Recommendations** - work with the Corridor Study Advisory Committees, the MPO board, and CTDOT to secure funding to implement projects recommended in the region, state and TMA corridor studies and transit studies.
- \* **Transportation Alternatives Program** - coordinate with CTDOT on the development of projects for the statewide transportation alternatives program including transportation enhancements, recreational trails, safe routes to school and other programs. This will include planning for inter-town projects and associated engineering cost for candidate projects for future funding.
- \* **Regional Transportation Safety Plan** – implement the recommendations in the RTSP in cooperation with LCRV municipalities and CTDOT
- \* **Strategic Highway Safety Plan** - implement the recommendations in the statewide SHSP in cooperation with LCRV municipalities and CTDOT
- \* **Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan** – implement the recommendations in the bike/ped plan in cooperation with LCRV municipalities and CTDOT
- \* **Local Road Accident Reduction Program** - continue to participate in the selection of projects for this statewide program. This will include the selection of the best candidates from towns.
- \* **Other Programs** - continue to participate in the selection of projects for other programs such as the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ), Emergency Relief Program (ER), Ferry Boat Terminal Program, Projects of regional significance, FHWA Competitive Grant Programs, and other programs vital to the region.
- \* **NEPA Compliance** – coordination of all planning studies with the NEPA process.
- \* **Climate Adaptation** – coordination of all planning activities and studies to mitigate effects of climate changes and sea level inundation.
- \* **EV Infrastructure** – identify opportunities for EV charging infrastructure and other lower emission modes of transportation
- \* **Safe Routes to School Planning** – continued support for member towns that are working on SRTS master plans
- \* **Active Transportation Microgrant Program** – Support towns with the Microgrant Program
- \* **LOCHSTP** – coordinate with CTDOT Bureau of Public Transit on development and prioritization of TMA and regional transit initiatives, projects and planning
- \* **Intelligent Transportation Systems** – work within TMA boundaries and with partner MPOs to plan for mobility and transit as well as strategies to improve the operational capacity of the evolving system. Also update of the Statewide ITS Architecture including transit.



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- \* **TMA Certification** – Address actions and recommendation from the FHWA/FTA certification review process

Anticipated Dates for Completion of Products is noted in the timeline

Products	Timeline
1. Transportation Improvement Program	JUNE 2026
2. STP-Urban Program – program of projects	FY 26/27
3. Transportation Alternatives Program project selection	FY 26/27
4. Local Road Accident Reduction Program project selection	FY 26/27
5. Section 5310 Program project selection	FY 26/27
6. Prioritization of projects for competitive funding	FY 26/27
7. Support towns with SRTS programs/planning	FY 26/27
8. Support towns with Microgrant Program	FY 26/27

### D. AIR QUALITY RELATED TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

#### Objectives

In October 1993, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) jointly issued revised planning regulations (23 CFR Part 450, Metropolitan Planning; Rule) governing the development of transportation plans and programs for urbanized areas. One of the requirements of this regulation (Section 450.310(c)) is that in air quality non-attainment or maintenance areas, if the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is not designated for air quality under section 174 of the Clean Air Act (CAA) (42 U.S.C. 7504), there shall be an agreement between the MPO and the designated agency, describing their respective roles and responsibilities for air quality related transportation planning. RiverCOG works with CTDOT in providing consideration of the impacts due to transportation on climate and air quality in the region.

#### Major Activities For FY 2026/2027

RiverCOG will continue to:

- Coordinate with other TMA regions to improve project methodology quality improvements
- Forward to DEEP, transportation technical committee and MPO meeting agendas
- Forward all future transportation plan updates and Transportation Improvement Plans (TIP) to DEEP for review and comment
- Incorporate or address DEEPs comments with updates to transportation plans and TIPs
- In cooperation with CTDOT, forward to DEEP, Air Quality Conformity Reports for review and comment; and meet with DEEP, as necessary, to discuss transportation air quality matters.

Anticipated Dates for Completion of Products is noted in the timeline

Products	Timeline
1. Endorse Air Quality Conformity Statement	FY26/27

2. Maintenance of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for a five-year period and endorsement of the Air Quality Conformity Statement and its related public involvement FY 26/27

#### **TASK 4: OTHER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

##### **Objectives**

To provide guidance and assistance in other facets of transportation planning to region towns, foster the development of sound public policy and viable land use planning, to promote bicycle and pedestrian travel in the Region, and educate board members. Many of the long-range activities including POCD assistance, TOD analysis and assistance are carryovers from previous UPWPs.

##### **Major Activities For FY 2026/2027**

- \* Assistance to member municipalities and stakeholders

Each year, the agency offers transportation planning assistance to its member municipalities. Upon request, RiverCOG assists member municipalities, public service agencies and state and federal governments with transportation matters. This assistance has included such varied activities as data collection and distribution, capital improvements planning, analysis of plans and reports, and coordination of state and local planning activities. Assistance to municipalities has included site plan review, an analysis of sidewalk location needs, information for the municipalities' updates to their Plans of Conservation and Development, specifically sections on transportation, GIS mapping, preparation of road and drainage ordinances, and assistance with scenic road designation applications. RiverCOG will work toward extensive public outreach to the region's population, especially underserved populations.

- Continued education of board members on new and existing transportation programs, especially after election years with board member turn-over.
- Bridge, Complete Street, Community Connectivity, etc. program improvements
- Sidewalk construction prioritization and funding opportunities.
- Bicycle route planning and coordination for re-striping with CTDOT Highway Districts, coordinating with repaving schedules.
- LOTCIP/TRIP Programs/Transportation Plan Implementation – various routes. LOTCIP and TRIP tasks are typically funded with 100% state funds, but eligible activities are listed in CTDOTs 'Handbook for Councils of Governments and Metropolitan Planning Organizations'
- EFLAP project development and program improvements
- TAP project development and program improvements
- CMAQ project development and program improvements
- STP urban and rural project development and program improvements
- Federal competitive program (EFLAP, Ferry, Scenic Byways, etc.) development and program improvements
- Traffic counts as needed on local routes
- Incorporate complete streets in projects with the bike/ped needs assessment form and programs through user analysis within studies and documents
- Coordination with Middletown and Portland on implementation of complete streets programs

## 2026-2027 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

- Coordination with East Hampton and Portland on RT 66 corridor, safety, congestion and other improvements
- Coordination with Clinton on RT 81 corridor safety, congestion and other improvements
- Coordination with municipalities on Plan of Conservation and Development Updates
- Transit Oriented/Friendly Development analysis and mapping
- Evacuation Route Planning for member towns as part of larger Region 2 DESPP Evacuation Planning and Mapping
- Bus shelter planning and mapping for member towns with transit routes
- Quinimay Trail Mennunketesuck/Cockaponsett Regional Greenway Implementation
- Coordination with the Middlesex, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook and Clinton Chambers of Commerce.
- Municipal liaison with Valley Railroad and CTDEP for long-range corridor planning
- Coordination, grant assistance for towns adjacent to Amtrak Shoreline East rail line – drainage, parking, and access improvements (Old Saybrook, Westbrook, Clinton)
- GIS Mapping assistance
- Regional oversight of Chester/Hadlyme Ferry operations and advocacy
- Technical assistance for rail station improvements
- Technical assistance for incident management
- ADA Transition Planning – Assist municipalities with more than 50 employees to create an ADA Transition Plan as required under the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 and education to ensure all programs, activities, and services under the municipality's jurisdiction are examined to identify barriers to access

Anticipated Dates for Completion of Products is noted in the timeline

Products	Timeline
1. Continued assistance with GIS mapping	FY 26/27
2. Provide additional assistance with specialized information for towns as requested	FY 26/27
3. Continue freight planning within region for towns	FY 26/27
4. Monitor planned recommendations for Chester-Hadlyme Ferry operations	FY 26/27
5. Continue plan to identify potential funding sources for bike facilities, including bike parking	FY 26/27
6. Staff Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	FY 26/27
7. Work on Regional Greenway Designations	FY 26/27
8. Safe Route to School Implementation	FY 26/27
9. Assistance to member municipalities with POCD updates	FY26/27
10. Bridge program assistance	FY 26/27
11. Assistance with LOTCIP and TRIP applications - tasks are Typically funded with 100% state funds	FY 26/27
12. Demographic data updates	FY 26/27
13. Review and coordination of environmental project analysis	FY 26/27
14. TOD Assistance to town with transit hubs: bus/rail stations	FY 26/27

## **Task 5: PUBLIC INFORMATION AND INVOLVEMENT**

### **Objectives**

RiverCOG in cooperation with the region's transit district and other stakeholders will undertake, within the limits of its staffing and financial capabilities, all reasonable means to involve the public in the transportation planning process. Particular emphasis will continue in 2026/2027 in the larger planning projects as outlined in this UPWP. The primary goal is to improve public understanding of transportation decision making process, the role of transportation in the over land use, environmental, and economic planning process, and alternatives available for consideration.

As issues arise and studies are prepared, a variety of approaches will be used to make the public aware of issues. These include preparing and circulating draft studies, stakeholder committees, public workshops and forums on land use and transportation, presentations to public and private groups, informal work sessions, and an "open door" policy relative to public requests for information, intergovernmental reviews and media coverage. The COG publishes an annual report of its activities which is widely circulated within the region. The text of the COGs annual report is included in the annual reports of the seventeen municipalities in the region. The primary objectives include:

- To involve the widest possible range of individuals and groups in the transportation planning process.
- To improve access to underserved populations to transportation alternatives
- To assure low income and minority groups are involved in the planning process.
- Identification of groups with limited English proficiency with current data and target those populations of major language groups with online instructions for access of data
- To assure that requirements of the federal regulations regarding the distribution of impacts and benefits of transportation programs are satisfied.
- Identifying public outreach methods that promote feedback and planning for transportation connectivity gaps in access to essential services (*ladders of opportunity*)
- To ensure fairness throughout the project development process through public engagement, needs identification, and measuring impacts to underserved communities

### **Major Activities For FY 2026/2027**

#### **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES**

- Evaluate the public involvement policy in context with existing population sectors identifying those population sectors that would normally not receive information.
- Conduct community involvement efforts for all major projects and programs including moving toward continued improvements for an accessible website.
- Conduct public outreach activities for transportation plans and initiatives. Another area of emphasis is to facilitate public involvement in transit planning.

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- Integrate Virtual Public Involvement (VPI) tools implemented during the pandemic into the overall transportation planning process and ensure continued public participation by individuals without access to computers and mobile devices
- Review the Public Participation Policy which incorporates best practices for outreach and inclusion.

### TITLE VI

- Continue to improve strategies to ensure Title VI by identifying and forecasting low income and minority populations and determining potential impacts of upcoming transportation projects. Use criteria when considering all transportation planning and implementation at both the policy and project level.
- Expand our efforts, through translation services, to make our programs more available to those with limited ability to speak English both for RiverCOG and in support of the transit district
- Expand its data collection program to address the full spectrum Title VI concerns assuring that transportation programs do not adversely impact or benefit persons based on their age, race, sex, or their disabilities.
- Identify potential deficiencies Title VI processes, RiverCOG will continue to review and update the region's Title VI process and provide assistance to member municipalities.
- Expand efforts to measure impacts of programs and projects in relation to underserved populations.
- Ensure fairness is observed throughout all phases of project development including but not limited to underserved populations such as minority low income and limited English proficiency populations, and non-motorized users such as pedestrians, bicyclists, and persons with mobility challenges.
- Support underserved and disadvantaged communities through improved infrastructure, safety, reduction of SOVs, reduced fares as appropriate; demand-response service, consider best practices in TOD and affordable housing strategies and consideration of people in the transportation planning process.
- Update and maintain a Title VI organizational chart, policy statement, complaint procedures, form, and log, brochure and LEP four factor analysis and assistance plan

Anticipated Dates for Completion of Products is noted in the timeline

Products	Timeline
1. Title VI Review	FY26/27
2. Updated mailing lists, newsletters, public meetings, Advisory committees, notice of meetings	FY 26/27

- |    |  |          |
|----|--|----------|
| 3. | Review Public Participation Plan for RiverCOG and identification of methods for improved outreach through media venues gaps in service | FY 26/27 |
| 4. | Identifying target areas of underserved populations or focus areas for limited English proficiency                                     | FY 26/27 |
| 5. | Enhance social media plan for RiverCOG Transportation section including survey and review by residents and underserved populations     | FY 26/27 |
| 6. | Create a public outreach plan potentially using a consultant to assist for innovative outreach methods through social media            | FY 26/27 |
| 7. | Census/demographic updates and GIS mapping   | FY 26/27 |
| 8. | Survey outreach for transportation, transit, rail, bike, and pedestrian  | FY 26/27 |

## **Task 6: NATURAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING**

### **Objectives**

To provide guidance and assistance and the opportunity for communities to come together and assess their ability to withstand and recover from a natural disaster and prioritize actions to mitigate damage that might be caused by future natural disasters. Natural hazard mitigation planning analyzes the natural hazards that could impact the region, determines risk and vulnerability, and defines actions that will be taken to make our region more resilient to natural disasters. Every community is unique but some common mitigation actions include replacement of undersized culverts and bridges, raising roads, flood proofing a school or fire station, purchase of open space for flood holding capacity, or creation of educational material concerning natural hazards and mitigation actions for a community's citizens.

Hazard mitigation planning seeks to:

- Reduce loss of life
- Reduce damage to property and infrastructure
- Reduce costs to residents and businesses for things like insurance, repair costs, and taxes
- Reduce municipal service costs (e.g. emergency response and infrastructure maintenance)
- Educate residents and policy makers concerning natural hazards and mitigation possibilities
- Connect hazard mitigation planning activities to other community planning efforts and
- Enhance and preserve natural resources systems.

### **Major Activities For FY 2026/2027**

Assistance to member municipalities and stakeholders - the agency offers natural hazard mitigation planning assistance to its member municipalities. Upon request, RiverCOG assists member municipalities, public service agencies and state and federal government with natural hazard mitigation planning. This assistance has included such varied activities as natural hazard mitigation plan updates and flood vulnerability studies. data collection and distribution, capital improvements planning, analysis



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of plans and reports, and coordination of state and local planning activities. Assistance to municipalities has included site plan review for flood prone area parking and roads in municipal centers and information for the municipalities' updates to their Plans of Conservation and Development, and GIS mapping. RiverCOG will work toward extensive public outreach to the region's population concerning natural hazard mitigation planning.

- Assist municipalities with pre-planning, data collection, and the natural hazard mitigation planning process.
- Assist municipalities with determining their internal capacity and capability for natural hazard mitigation.
- Assist municipalities in assessing their risk to natural hazards.
- Assist municipalities in developing mitigation goals and strategies.
- Assist municipalities with creating natural hazard mitigation plans to facilitate grant opportunities for natural hazard mitigation funding.

Products	Timeline
1. Continued assistance with GIS mapping	FY 26/27
2. Provide additional assistance with specialized information for towns as requested.	FY 26/27
3. Complete natural hazard mitigation plans for 15 municipalities and the region.	FY 26/27
4. Assist municipalities with natural hazard mitigation education and outreach.	FY 26/27
5. Continue to identify potential funding sources for mitigation projects.	FY 26/27
6. Continue to seek funding for bridge, culvert, and flood prone road and transportation infrastructure funding.	FY 26/27
7. Continue to seek funding for flood mitigation through open space protection.	FY 26/27

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## FINANCIAL PLAN

**Table I**

UPWP Funding Sources FY 2026 & 2027

Funding Sources	Federal		State	Local	TOTAL
	FHWA	FTA			
2026 FHWA & FTA	\$423,080.80	\$67,632.00	\$61,339.10	\$61,339.10	<b>\$613,391.00</b>
2027 FHWA & FTA	423,080.80	67,632.00	61,339.10	61,339.10	<b>613,391.00</b>
2024 thru 2027 Complete Streets	29,530.00		0.00	0.00	<b>29,530.00</b>
DOT 07269997PL Carryover	5,181.00		0.00	1,295.00	<b>6,476.00</b>
IJA Carryover	103,410.00		0.00	25,852.00	<b>129,262.00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,119,546.60</b>		<b>\$122,678.20</b>	<b>\$149,825.20</b>	<b>\$1,392,050.00</b>

**Table II**

Staff Hours and Budget for FY 2026 & 2027

		Task 1 Management/ Administration		Task 2 Data Collection/ Analysis		Task 3 Planning Activities		Task 4 Other Technical Assistance		Task 5 Public Involvement		Task 6 Natural Hazard Mitigation		Totals	
Position	Rate	Hours	Cost	Hours	Cost	Hours	Cost	Hours	Cost	Hours	Cost	Hours	Cost	Hours	Cost
Executive Director	\$84.11	100	\$8,431	0	\$0	360	\$30,285	611	\$51,418	69	\$5,816	0	\$0	1141	\$95,950
Deputy Director/ Principal Planner	\$54.46	0	\$0	136	\$7,428	787	\$42,888	91	\$4,952	0	\$0	0	\$0	1015	\$55,269
Senior Transportation Planner	\$54.09	262	\$14,180	464	\$25,117	1233	\$66,697	279	\$15,107	187	\$10,136	0	\$0	2426	\$131,237
Senior Environmental Planner	\$50.63	0	\$0	0	\$0	1021	\$51,708	136	\$6,906	0	\$0	332	\$16,785	1489	\$75,399
GIS Planner	\$39.97	0	\$0	545	\$21,801	409	\$16,335	0	\$0	0	\$0	93	\$3,733	1047	\$41,869
Regional Planner	\$45.97	0	\$0	21	\$986	432	\$19,871	69	\$3,185	162	\$7,442	0	\$0	685	\$31,483
Transit Planner	\$37.47	0	\$0	5	\$185	83	\$3,128	0	\$0	18	\$683	0	\$0	107	\$3,996
Planner/Planning Intern	\$24.00	0	\$0	1283	\$30,795	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	1283	\$30,795
Community Planner	\$40.54	0	\$0	91	\$3,686	0	\$0	134	\$5,434	119	\$4,827	75	\$3,033	419	\$16,980
Financial Administrator	\$53.88	98	\$5,303	0	\$0	0	\$0	21	\$1,126	0	\$0	0	\$0	119	\$6,428
Financial Assistant	\$33.24	68	\$2,267		\$0		\$0		\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	68	\$2,267
Administrative Assistant	\$33.24	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	13	\$441	14	\$460	0	\$0	27	\$901
<b>TOTAL SALARIES</b>			\$30,180		\$89,998		\$230,911		\$88,570		\$29,364		\$23,551		\$492,574
<b>Indirect Costs 130%</b>			\$39,234		\$116,997		\$300,185		\$115,141		\$38,173		\$30,616		\$640,346
<b>Direct Costs</b>			\$1,500		\$ 2,100		\$61,800		\$ 2,400		\$ 2,200		\$ 189,130		\$259,130
<b>Totals</b>			<b>\$70,914</b>		<b>\$209,096</b>		<b>\$592,896</b>		<b>\$206,110</b>		<b>\$69,737</b>		<b>\$243,297</b>		<b>\$1,392,050</b>
			5.09%		15.02%		42.59%		14.81%		5.01%		17.48%		100.00%

The RiverCOG work week is 35 or 40 hours

**Table III**Maximum Hourly Rates for Staff FY 2026 & 2027

<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Maximum Hourly Rate</b>
Executive Director	\$95.00
Deputy Director /Principal Planner	\$75.00
Senior Transportation Planner	\$65.00
Senior Environmental Planner	\$65.00
Senior Planner	\$65.00
GIS Planner	\$55.00
Transit Planner	\$55.00
Regional Planner	\$55.00
Community Planner	\$55.00
Planner/Planning Intern	\$45.00
Financial Administrator	\$65.00
Financial Assistant	\$50.00
Administrative Assistant	\$45.00

**Table IV**Financial Responsibility by Task FY 2026 & 2027

Estimated Planning Funds				
<i>Task</i>	<i>Federal</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>RiverCOG-MPO</i>	<i>Total</i>
1) Management/Administration	\$ 57,032	\$ 6,249	\$ 7,632	\$ 70,914
2) Data Collection/Analysis	\$ 168,164	\$ 18,427	\$ 22,505	\$ 209,095
3) Planning Activities	\$ 476,832	\$ 52,251	\$ 63,813	\$ 592,896
4) Other Technical Assistance	\$ 165,763	\$ 18,164	\$ 22,183	\$ 206,110
5) Public Involvement	\$ 56,086	\$ 6,146	\$ 7,506	\$ 69,737
6) Natural Hazard Mitigation	\$ 195,670	\$ 21,441	\$ 26,186	\$ 243,297
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,119,547</b>	<b>\$ 122,678</b>	<b>\$ 149,825</b>	<b>\$ 1,392,050</b>

## APPENDICES

### Statement of Cooperative MPO/State/Transit Operators' Planning Roles & Responsibilities

#### Purpose

The purpose of this statement is to outline the roles and responsibilities of the State, the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments MPO (RiverCOG) and appropriate providers of public transportation as required by 23 CFR Sec. 450.314(a), (h) "Metropolitan Planning Agreements".

#### General Roles & Responsibilities

The RiverCOG will perform the transportation planning process for their region and develop procedures to coordinate transportation planning activities in accordance with applicable federal regulations and guidance. The transportation process will, at a minimum, consist of:

1. Preparation of a two-year Unified Planning Work Program that lists and describes all transportation planning studies and tasks to be completed during this two-year period.
2. Preparation and update of a long range, multi-modal metropolitan transportation plan.
3. Preparation and maintenance of a short-range transportation improvement program (TIP).
4. Financial planning to ensure plan and program are financially constrained and within anticipated funding levels.
5. Conduct planning studies and system performance monitoring, including highway corridor and intersection studies, transit system studies, application of advanced computer techniques, and transportation data collection and archiving.
6. Public outreach, including survey of affected populations, electronic dissemination of reports and information (website), and consideration of public comments.
7. Ensuring the transportation planning process evaluates the benefits and burdens of transportation projects and/or investments to ensure significant or disproportionate impacts on low income and minority populations are avoided and/or mitigated. This will be accomplished using traditional and non-traditional outreach to Title VI populations, including outreach to LEP populations.
8. Development and implementation of a Congestion Management Process as appropriate.
9. Ensuring plans, projects and programs are consistent with and conform to air quality goals of reducing transportation-related emissions and attaining National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

10. Self-certify the metropolitan planning process at least once every four years, concurrent with TIP adoption and submittal, certifying the planning process is being conducted in accordance with all applicable federal requirements and addressing the major issues facing the area.

#### **Long Range Metropolitan Transportation Plan**

1. RiverCOG will be responsible for preparing and developing the long range (20–25 years) metropolitan transportation plans for their respective region.
2. RiverCOG may develop a consolidated transportation plan summary report for the planning region that includes the key issues facing the area and priority programs and projects.
3. CTDOT will provide the following information and data in support of developing the transportation plan:
  - a. Financial information - estimate of anticipated federal funds over the 20-25 year time frame of the plan for the highway and transit programs.
  - b. Trip tables - for each analysis year, including base year and the horizon year of the plan by trip purpose and mode. *(CT DOT will provide this only if requested since RiverCOG may maintain their own travel forecast model.)*
  - c. Traffic count data for state roads in the RiverCOG region, and transit statistics as available.
  - d. List of projects of statewide significance by mode, with descriptions, so that they can be incorporated into the long range metropolitan transportation plans.
  - e. Assess air quality impacts and conduct the regional emissions assessment of the plan. Will provide the results of the assessment in a timely manner to allow inclusion in the plan and to be made available to the public at public information meetings. (Refer to air quality tasks.)
4. RiverCOG may conduct transportation modeling for the area.
5. RiverCOG will consult with the appropriate providers of public transportation on local bus capital projects to include in the transportation plan and will work together to develop local bus improvements for the plan from the 10-year capital program. Through consultation, they will identify future local bus needs and services, including new routes, service expansion, rolling stock needs beyond replacement, and operating financial needs.

#### **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

1. The selection of projects in the TIP and the development of the TIP will occur through a consultative process between CTDOT, RiverCOG, and the appropriate provider(s) of public transportation.

2. CTDOT will send a draft proposed 5-year Capital Plan to the RiverCOG for review and comment. The draft list will reflect input that the CT DOT received from the RiverCOG during the consultation process on the previous year's plan.
3. CTDOT will prepare an initial list of projects to include in the new TIP. This list will be based on the current TIP that is about to expire and the 5- year Capital Plan.
4. CTDOT will consult with and solicit comments from RiverCOG and River Valley Transit on the TIP and incorporate where practicable.
5. CTDOT will provide detailed project descriptions, cost estimates and program schedules. The project descriptions will provide sufficient detail to allow the RiverCOG to explain the projects to the policy board and the general public.
6. CTDOT will provide a list of projects obligated during each of the federal fiscal years covered by the TIP/STIP. The annual listing of obligated projects should include both highway and transit projects.
7. RiverCOG will compile the TIP for the Region, including preparing a narrative. Projects will be categorized by federal aid program and listed in summary tables. The TIP will be converted into a format that will allow it to be downloaded to the Region's website. RiverCOG will maintain the TIP by tracking amendments and changes to projects (schedule, scope, and cost) made through the TIP/STIP Administrative Action/Amendment/Notification process.
8. CTDOT will develop the STIP based on the MPOs' TIPs and projects located in the rural regions of the State.
9. CTDOT will include one STIP entry each for the Bridge program and the Highway Safety Improvement program. This entry will list the total funds needed for these programs for each fiscal year. All Regions will receive back up lists in the form of the Bridge Report and the Safety Report monthly. The one line entry will reduce the number of entries needed in the STIP. Any projects listed in the Bridge and or Safety Report that are over \$5m and on the NHS, will be transferred directly into the STIP as its own entry per the TIP/STIP Administrative Action/Amendment/Notification process.
10. CTDOT will provide proposed amendments to the RiverCOG for consideration. The amendment will include a project description that provides sufficient detail to allow the RiverCOG to explain the proposed changes to the RiverCOG board and project management contact information. It will also provide a clear reason and justification for the amendment. If it involves a new project, CTDOT will provide a clear explanation of the reasons and rationale for adding it to the TIP/STIP.
11. When an amendment to the TIP/STIP is being proposed by the RiverCOG, the project sponsor will consult with CTDOT to obtain concurrence with the proposed amendment, to obtain Air

Quality review and consistency with Air Quality Conformity regulations and ensure financial consistency.

12. CTDOT will provide a financial assessment of the STIP with each update. RiverCOG should prepare a TIP summary table listing all projects by funding program sorted by year based on CTDOT's financial assessment demonstrating and maintaining financial constraint by year.

### **Air Quality Planning**

1. CTDOT and RiverCOG should meet at least once per year to discuss the air quality conformity process, the regional emissions analysis and air quality modeling.
2. CTDOT will conduct the regional emissions analysis, which includes the RiverCOG area and provide the results to the RiverCOG. The regional emissions analyses for the build or future years will include the proposed transportation improvements included in the regional long-range metropolitan transportation plans and TIP.
3. RiverCOG will prepare a summary report of the conformity process and regional emissions analysis for the Region. It will contain a table showing the estimated emissions from the transportation system for each criteria pollutant and analysis year.
4. The summary report on the regional emissions analyses will be inserted into the long-range transportation plan and TIP.
5. RiverCOG will make the regional emissions analysis available to the public.

### **Public Participation Program**

1. The RiverCOG will annually review and evaluate their public participation program.
2. The RiverCOG will update and prepare a list of neighborhood and local organizations and groups that will receive notices of MPO plans, programs and projects.
3. The RiverCOG will work to ensure that low-income, minority and transit dependent individuals are afforded an adequate opportunity to participate in the transportation planning process, receive a fair share of the transportation improvement benefits and do not endure a disproportionate transportation burden. RiverCOG will comply with federal legislation on these issues.
4. The RiverCOG's process for developing plans, projects, and programs will include consultation with state and local agencies responsible for land use and growth management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation.
5. The RiverCOG will maintain their website to provide clear and concise information on the transportation planning process and provide an opportunity to download reports and documents. This will include developing project and study summaries, converting reports



into a pdf or text format, and maintaining a list of available documents. The website will provide links to other associated organizations and agencies.

### **Public Transportation Planning**

1. The RiverCOG will allow for, to the extent feasible, the participation of transit providers at all transportation committee and policy board meetings to provide advice, information, and consultation on transportation programs within the planning region.
2. The RiverCOG will provide the opportunity for the transit provider(s) to review and comment on planning products relating to transit issues within the region.
3. The RiverCOG will allow for transit provider(s) to participate in UPWP, long-range plan, and TIP development to ensure the consideration of any appropriate comments.
4. The RiverCOG and CTDOT will assist the transit provider(s), to the extent feasible, with planning for transit-related activities.

### **Fiscal/Financial Planning**

1. The CTDOT will provide the RiverCOG with up-to-date fiscal and financial information on the statewide and regional transportation improvement programs to the extent practicable. This will include:
  - a. Anticipated federal funding resources by federal aid category and state funding resources for the upcoming federal fiscal year, as shown in the TIP financial chart.
  - b. Will hold annual meetings to discuss authorized funds for the STP-Urban and LOTCIP accounts.
  - c. Annual authorized/programmed funds for the FTA Section 5307 Program as contained in the STIP and the annual UZA split agreements.
  - d. Monthly updates of STP-Urban Program showing current estimated cost & scheduled obligation dates.
2. The CTDOT will notify the RiverCOG when the anticipated cost of a project, regardless of funding category, has changed in accordance with the agreed upon TIP/STIP Administrative Action/Amendment/Notification process.
3. The RiverCOG will prepare summary tables and charts that display financial information for presentation to the policy board.

### **Congestion Management Process (CMP) Program**

1. The RiverCOG, if located in a TMA, will conduct a highway performance monitoring program that includes the gathering of available traffic counts and travel time information and determination of travel speeds and delay.

2. The RiverCOG will conduct congestion strategies studies for critical corridors and identify possible improvements to reduce congestion and delay.
3. The RiverCOG will work with CTDOT on programming possible congestion-reducing projects.
4. The RiverCOG will, upon implementation of a congestion reduction improvement, assess post-improvement operations and determine level of congestion relief.

#### **Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Program**

1. The CTDOT will maintain the statewide ITS architecture and ensure consistency with the Regional ITS Architecture for the RiverCOG.
2. The RiverCOG will maintain and update the Regional ITS Architecture for the RiverCOG, where appropriate.

#### **Performance Based Planning and Programming**

##### **A. Collection of Performance Data**

1. All data collected for performance measure goals will be collected by the CTDOT and will meet the MAP 21/FAST ACT provisions and requirements, unless the MPO decides to set its own performance target, in which case the MPO will be responsible for collecting their own data.
2. All data collected for goals for Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) State of Good Repair performance measures and Safety performance measures established under the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) will include data provided by the Transit Districts to the National Transit Database (NTD) and through CTDOT, in accordance with the Transit Asset Management Rule.
3. CTDOT will make the compiled data collected for each performance measure available on a platform accessible by CTDOT and the MPO's.
4. CTDOT will develop a Measures and Deliverables tracking spreadsheet outlining each Performance Measure, the deliverables required, the submittal dates and the CTDOT contact and provide to the RiverCOG.

##### **B. Selection of Performance Targets**

CTDOT will draft statewide performance targets for each of the FAST Act performance measures and coordinate with the MPOs and Transit Representatives, as required by 23 CFR Parts 450 and 771, as well as 49 CFR Part 613 as outlined below:

1. The CTDOT will discuss performance measures at each of the regularly scheduled monthly meetings (via teleconference or in person meeting).
2. The CTDOT will present data collected for each performance measure and collaborate with the RiverCOG and Transit Representatives on assumptions.
3. The CTDOT will provide RiverCOG and Transit Representative with 30 days to provide feedback on the data received and the assumptions provided.

4. The feedback received will be discussed at the next scheduled monthly meeting.
5. CTDOT will set targets for each performance measure with consideration of feedback received.

### **C. Reporting of Performance Targets**

- 1 CTDOT will notify the RiverCOG and Transit Representatives by email when final statewide targets are established.
- 2 CTDOT will send the targets that have been set, the backup information and a PowerPoint presentation to RiverCOG for their use in educating the MPO Policy Board. CTDOT will provide region level data summaries, if available.
- 3 The RiverCOG has 180 days after the CTDOT establishes their targets to establish their own targets or endorse the State's targets and agree to plan and program projects so that they contribute toward the accomplishment of the performance targets.
- 4 If the RiverCOG is establishing their own targets, the RiverCOG will report those targets to the CTDOT by email no later than the 180 day timeframe.
- 5 The RiverCOG will share this information with the Policy Board and will require Policy Board resolution to support the targets set by CTDOT or endorse their own targets.
- 6 The RiverCOG will forward the Policy Board resolution to the Performance Measures Unit at the CTDOT before the 180-day limitation for FHWA performance measures via the [DOT.Map21@ct.gov](mailto:DOT.Map21@ct.gov) email box.
- 7 For FTA performance measures, it is noted that MPO name provided a resolution of support for the initial transit State of Good Repair (SGR) performance targets on July 1, 2017. Thereafter, in accordance with FTA, transit providers will continue to share their targets annually with the RiverCOG. However, RiverCOG targets are not required to be updated annually, only revisited whenever the RiverCOG updates their MTP and/or TIP on or after October 1, 2018.
- 8 For FTA safety performance measures as part of the PTASP, the RiverCOG has received the Plan which included safety performance targets and will have 180 days to support these initial targets. Each transit provider is required to review its agency Safety Plan annually and update the plan, including the safety performance targets, as necessary.

### **D. Reporting of progress toward achieving goal**

1. CTDOT will document progress towards achieving statewide performance targets annually, and report to the NTD. Information will be available to the RiverCOG and transit representatives for use in updates to the Long-Range Transportation Plan, the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, the CTDOT TAM Plans and the FTA Annual report by email after the required reports are issued to Federal Agencies.

2. CTDOT will share updated TAM Plans with the RiverCOG in a timely manner, and the MPOs will incorporate them into their planning process.
3. RiverCOG will document progress towards achieving performance targets and report that information to CTDOT in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Plan as outlined in the Measures and Deliverables tracking spreadsheet via email. The CTDOT will collect this information and file until requested from FHWA/FTA.

**E. The collection of data for the State asset management plan for the NHS**

1. CTDOT will collect all asset management data required for all NHS routes, regardless of ownership.

30 Performance Measures

Highway Safety	Number of Fatalities - 5-Year Rolling Average
Highway Safety	Rate of Fatalities per 100 million VMT - 5-Year Rolling Average
Highway Safety	Number of Serious Injuries - 5-Year Rolling Average
Highway Safety	Rate of Serious Injuries per 100 million VMT - 5-Year Rolling Average
Highway Safety	Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities and Non-Motorized Serious Injuries - 5-Year Rolling Average
Bridges & Pavements	Percentage of Pavements of the Interstate System in Good Condition
Bridges & Pavements	Percentage of Pavements of the Interstate System in in Poor Condition
Bridges & Pavements	Percentage of Pavements of the Non-Interstate NHS in Good Condition
Bridges & Pavements	Percentage of Pavements of the Non-Interstate NHS in Poor Condition
Bridges & Pavements	Percentage of NHS Bridges classified in Good Condition (by deck area)
Bridges & Pavements	Percentage of NHS Bridges classified in Poor Condition (by deck area)
System Performance	Percent of the Person-Miles Traveled on the Interstate That Are Reliable

## 2026-2027 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

System Performance	Percent of the Person-Miles Traveled on the Non-Interstate NHS That Are Reliable
Freight	Percent of the Interstate System mileage providing for reliable truck travel times
Congestion and Air Quality (beg 2022)	Annual Hours of Peak-Hour Excessive Delay (PHED)
Congestion and Air Quality	Percent of Non-SOV Travel
Congestion and Air Quality (beg 2022)	Total Emissions Reduction
Transit Asset Management	Percentage of Service (non-revenue) Vehicles that have met or exceeded their Useful Life Benchmark (ULB)
Transit Asset Management	Percentage of Facilities with an asset class rated below condition 3 on the TERM scale.
Transit Asset Management	Infrastructure (rail, fixed guideway, track, signals, and systems) - Percentage of track segments with performance restrictions
Transit Asset Management	Percentage of Revenue Vehicles within a particular asset class that have met or exceeded their ULB
FTA C 5010.1E	Number of fatalities per “vehicle revenue miles.” by mode.
FTA C 5010.1E	Number of serious injuries per “vehicle revenue miles.” by mode.
PTASP safety performance targets	Fatalities (total number of reported fatalities)
PTASP safety performance targets	Fatalities (fatality rate per total vehicle revenue miles by mode)
PTASP safety performance targets	Injuries (total number of reportable injuries)
PTASP safety performance targets	Injuries (injury rate per total vehicle revenue miles by mode)
PTASP safety performance targets	Safety Events (total number of reportable safety events)
PTASP safety performance targets	Safety Events (safety event rate per total vehicle revenue miles by mode)

PTASP safety performance targets	System Reliability (mean distance between mechanical failures by mode)
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**Amendment**

This Statement on Transportation Planning may be amended from time to time or to coincide with annual UPWP approval as jointly deemed necessary or in the best interests of all parties, including Federal transportation agencies.

**Effective Date**

This Statement will be effective after it has been endorsed by the RiverCOG as part of the UPWP, and as soon as the UPWP has been approved by the relevant Federal transportation agencies.

**No Limitation on Statutory Authority**

Nothing contained in this Statement is intended to or shall limit the authority or responsibilities assigned to signatory organizations under Connecticut law, federal law, local ordinance, or charter.

## Resolutions



### Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments

145 Dennison Road Essex, CT 06426 | +1 860 581 8554 | [www.rivercog.org](http://www.rivercog.org)

#### Metropolitan Planning Organization

#### RESOLUTION FY 2026-2027 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)

**WHEREAS:** The Lower Connecticut River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (RiverMPO), in cooperation with the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), and the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments (RiverCOG) as designated transportation planning agency, is responsible for carrying out the urban transportation planning process for the Lower Connecticut River Valley Region;

**WHEREAS:** This Unified Planning Work Program is developed in cooperation with the Connecticut Department of Transportation, U.S. Department of Transportation, and transportation stakeholders.

**WHEREAS:** RiverMPO, in cooperation with CTDOT and RiverCOG is responsible for adopting the Unified Planning Work Program;

**WHEREAS:** The Unified Planning Work Program covers Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027

**WHEREAS:** RiverCOG, as transportation planning agency for the Lower Connecticut River Valley region, in cooperation with the RiverMPO and CTDOT, will perform the transportation planning activities contained in the adopted Unified Planning Work Program and will contract with federal, state, and local agencies to receive and disperse planning funds to carry out the adopted Unified Planning Work Program; and

#### NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION HEREBY:

Endorses the Lower Connecticut River Valley Region Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Unified Planning Work Program as amended, contingent upon no major adverse comments received during said comment period.

This Resolution is effective: May 28, 2025

Date: May 28, 2025

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Anthony Salvatore, Chairman





## Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments

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### Metropolitan Planning Organization

#### RESOLUTION REGARDING TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- WHEREAS:** The Lower Connecticut River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (RiverMPO) is designated as the transportation planning policy board for the Lower Connecticut River Valley Region by the Governor of the State of Connecticut, and that the RiverMPO is the designated transportation planning agency;
- WHEREAS:** Federal regulations (23 CFR 410.310) require that the responsibilities for cooperatively carrying out transportation planning (including corridor and sub-area studies) and programming shall be clearly identified in an agreement or memorandum of understanding between the State and MPO;
- WHEREAS:** The USDOT and CTDOT have developed a Statement of MPO Planning Roles and Responsibilities that fulfills the requirement of 23 CFR 410.310;
- WHEREAS:** The Statement of MPO Planning Roles and Responsibilities will be an appendix to the FY 2026-2027 Unified Planning Work Program;

#### NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION HEREBY;

Endorses the Statement of MPO Planning Roles and Responsibilities and approves its addition to the FY 2026-2027 Unified Planning Work Program.

This resolution is effective: May 28, 2025.

Date: May 28, 2025

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Anthony Salvatore, Chairman