

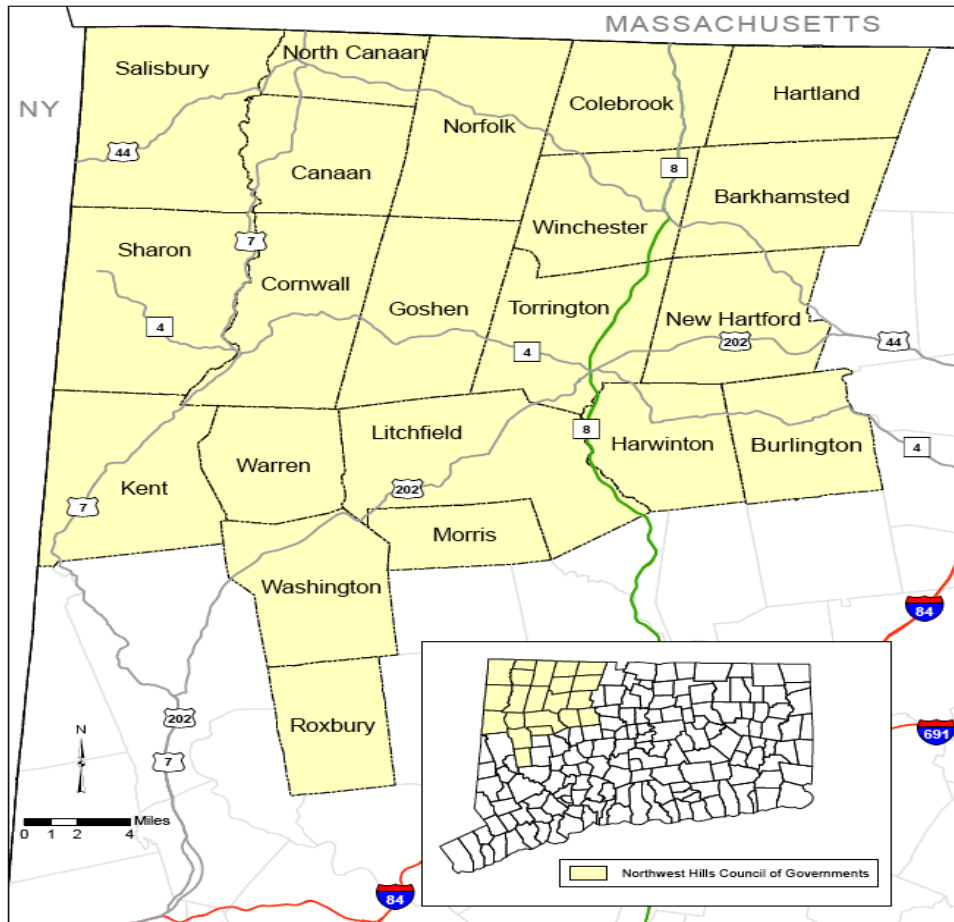
NORTHWEST HILLS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
TRANSPORTATION UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM
(UPWP)
FISCAL YEARS 2024 and 2025



Adopted: May 11, 2023

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Northwest Hills Council of Governments (NHCOCG) is the state recognized regional planning organization for the 21-member towns of Barkhamsted, Burlington, Canaan, Colebrook, Cornwall, Goshen, Hartland, Harwinton, Kent, Litchfield, Morris, New Hartford, Norfolk, North Canaan, Roxbury, Salisbury, Sharon, Torrington, Warren, Washington, and Winchester. Each member town is represented on the NHCOCG by their chief elected official. The region is mostly rural with a population of 112,273 (DOHS estimate as of July 2021).

Transportation in Northwest Hills takes on many forms. The region has municipal and state-maintained roadways, two rail lines, a public bus system, a commercial bus line, and numerous walkways and trails. Proper decisions and investments in our transportation systems is critical to the well-being of our region from both an economic perspective and from that of the quality of life enjoyed by the residents and visitors to this part of Connecticut.

Through our regional transportation planning process, the NHCOCG is responsible for making transportation policy decisions in the Northwest Hills region in cooperation with the FHWA, FTA, and Connecticut Department of Transportation.

As a condition of the receipt of Federal funds for highway and transit planning, the NHCOCG is required to prepare an annual Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) detailing how the planning funds will be utilized. The work tasks described in the UPWP are conducted on a continuous basis in order to maintain eligibility for Federal highway and transit funds, and to plan for the orderly and efficient development of the transportation system infrastructure. Also required by this process is the development of a long-range transportation plan, review, and action on CTDOT's proposed short-range transportation improvement program, and other planning related activities.

Funding sources for the NHCOCG's transportation planning process include Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Planning Funds (SPR Funds), Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5303 Funds, state funds, and local funds.

The following UPWP has been prepared to define the work tasks and anticipated funding requirements for the NHCOCG region for two fiscal years. One fiscal year covers the period July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. The other fiscal year covers the period of July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.

The UPWP, as outlined in this document, contains the work tasks necessary to conduct the priority transportation planning activities for the NHCOCG region. The UPWP contains a brief description of program objectives, the strategy to address the objectives, resulting program products, and anticipated staff costs. In developing the UPWP, the NHCOCG, as required under federal law, must consider projects and strategies that address and support the following:

- Economic Vitality – Support the economic vitality of the area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.

- Safety – Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
- Security – Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- Environment – Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, enhance air quality, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
- System Integration – Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- Accessibility and Mobility – Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and freight;
- System Management – Promote efficient system management and operation;
- System Preservation – Emphasize preservation of the existing transportation system;
- Resiliency and Reliability – Improve both the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation; and
- Enhance travel and tourism.

As the official regional planning organization for the twenty-one towns in the Northwest Hills Region, the NHCOG recognizes the importance of a regional perspective in addressing transportation issues. By encouraging coordinated thinking on transportation investments and issues, greater cost efficiencies and improved decision making can be achieved.

The major focus of the following UPWP is implementation of the NHCOG’s Regional Transportation Plan which was prepared and adopted in 2016 and is in the process of being updated in FY2024. The work program also calls for the continued provision of technical assistance as needed to federal, state, and local agencies on transportation related issues and the advocating of funding for needed transportation improvements.

Among the major transportation issues in the Northwest Hills Region are: 1) State road improvements, 2) local road improvement and maintenance, 3) measuring, projecting and controlling congestion, 4) rail line maintenance and enhancement 5) improved coordination of land use and transportation planning, 6) improvement of existing transit facilities and services, 7) control of speeding on local and state roadways, 8) improved resiliency planning 9) enhanced planning for pedestrian and bicycle transportation and 10) assist municipalities with affordable housing initiatives. Each of these issues will be addressed in the COG’s regional transportation planning process through the UPWP.

Additional objectives of the NHCOG’s regional transportation planning process are to encourage public participation in transportation planning activities, comply with all equal employment opportunity and civil rights regulations, and ensure that all federal and state guidelines are followed with respect to grant administration and awarding of contracts.

II. SPR WORK PROGRAM FINANCIAL SUMMARY - FY 2024 and FY 2025

<u>WORK PROGRAM ELEMENT/ACTIVITY</u>	<u>Percent of Work Program</u>	<u>FY 2024 Budget</u>	<u>FY 2025 Budget</u>
TASK 1: Planning and Technical Assistance	85%	281,920	281,920
TASK 2: Program Administration	15%	49,750	49,750
TOTAL	100%	331,670	331,670

FUNDING SOURCES

	<u>FY 2024</u>		<u>FY 2025</u>	
Task 1:				
	FHWA	225,536	FHWA	225,536
	CTDOT	28,192	CTDOT	28,192
	Local	28,192	Local	28,192
Task 2:				
	FHWA	39,800	FHWA	39,800
	CTDOT	4,975	CTDOT	4,975
	Local	4,975	Local	4,975
	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$331,670</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$331,670</u>

MAXIMUM HOURLY RATE BY EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATION*

Executive Director: \$80/hour

Deputy Director/Community and Economic Development Director: \$75/hour

Transportation Director: \$70/hour

Senior Regional Planner: \$65/hour

Finance Officer: \$55/hour

Regional Planner/GIS Coordinator: \$55/hour

Financial Manager: \$45/hour

Program Manager/Office Manager: \$45/hour

* Note: Does not include overhead costs.

III. SPR - WORK PROGRAM TASK DESCRIPTIONS - FY 2024 and FY 2025

TASK 1: Planning and Technical Assistance

Objectives:

To refine, augment and implement the regional transportation system goals, objectives, and strategies as developed and presented in the regional transportation plan. Also, to advocate funding for needed improvements and provide technical assistance as needed to federal, state, and local agencies on transportation related issues.

Methodology:

1. Continue to meet with town officials, the general public, state officials, and key public transportation providers to discuss regional transportation needs and priorities. Attend transportation planning workshops as appropriate to keep up to date on transportation planning goals, objectives, and strategies.
2. Continue to monitor and develop information on current demographic and population trends, traffic flow patterns, freight movement, transit demand, employment, land use characteristics, etc. in the Region that are important for regional transportation planning.
3. Closely monitor funding opportunities under the federal transportation bill as they relate to regional transportation improvement priorities as identified through the NHCOG's regional transportation planning process. Advocate funding for needed improvements based on regional priority list of transportation projects developed for the Region.
4. Serve as the liaison between federal/state agencies and municipalities in transportation related matters primarily by relaying local needs to CTDOT and informing the region's municipalities of federal and state programs. Provide input to CTDOT on the Northwest Hills portion of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and any proposed STIP amendments or administrative actions.
5. Serve as a clearinghouse for regional transportation information including demographic information, average daily traffic figures, accident statistics, public transportation services and schedules, and socio-economic data.
6. Through the mandatory referral process, discuss the intermunicipal impacts on the transportation network of subdivision and zone change proposals near municipal boundaries when appropriate.
7. If requested, coordinate the reporting by regional municipalities to FHWA and CTDOT of improvements to selected Highway Performance Monitoring System sections as defined by the Federal Highway Administration. Also facilitate the preparation of the 536 Report (Highway Capital Outlay Expenditures/Local Roads) for regional municipalities.

8. Conduct a quarterly count of space utilization of the Region's state-run commuter parking lots on a "typical" weekday and consider the need and potential for additional or improved commuter parking lots.
9. Facilitate AADT counts on selected local roads as requested by local officials through the use of NHCOG's traffic counters. Provide this data to CTDOT as it becomes available.
10. Continue to coordinate and provide staff assistance for periodic meetings of the Northwest Hills Road Supervisors Association to discuss road maintenance and improvement issues, provide training opportunities, and pursue cooperative purchasing opportunities as appropriate.
11. Continue to serve as program administrator for the "Northwest Hills Public Works Equipment Cooperative" including the scheduling, monitoring, and financial management for the regional sweepers, catch basin cleaners, straw throwers, asphalt recyclers, asphalt hot-boxes, and material screeners.
12. Provide coordination assistance as necessary in the development of the State Implementation Plan as developed by the CT DEEP. Also address environmental mitigation issues as necessary with the relevant regulatory agencies.
13. Provide technical assistance to member towns on transportation related issues including access management.
14. Continue the development of computerized mapping capabilities (GIS) as appropriate at the NHCOG office for assistance with regional and local transportation planning. Acquire or replace computers, peripherals, or other office equipment as necessary. Provide needed training to regional planning staff to enhance GIS capacity and services. Pursue on-going enhancement of GIS parcel mapping for all towns in region.
15. Continue to provide technical and administrative assistance concerning the LOTCIP, STP programs, CMAQ, and TAP including project development, regional review and prioritization, and monitoring of municipal project schedules. Continue coordination and project design assistance for the Rural Collector Program.
16. Assist CTDOT in updating their Land Use Forecast and Major New Development files when requested by soliciting local input and reviewing preliminary numbers.
17. Continue coordination with CTDOT on monitoring of air quality conformancy and the updating of land use data, including population and employment forecasts.
18. Collect and analyze transportation data for future updates of the Regional Transportation Plan.

19. Continue to evaluate Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) alternatives and the Statewide ITS architecture as they relate to the Northwest Hills Region. Pursue those strategies that should be implemented in the regional area.
20. Refine the strategy for addressing federal mandates related to Title 6 and Environmental Justice as needed. Specifically, continue to examine the impact of transportation plans on underserved communities. Seek to provide assistance to the transit dependent population and others in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
21. Assess needs for State legislation to enhance transportation facilities and/or services in the development of NHCOG's annual legislative priority list.
22. Consider the issue of safety and security of the transportation system in all transportation planning and project development activities. Give particular attention to the regional emergency planning elements being developed by DEMHS in their regional emergency operation plan. Pursue implementation of Regional Transportation Safety Plan as developed for the region in 2019.
23. Continue to consult with local and state land use management, natural resource, historic and other agencies in the transportation planning process. Also consider updated local and state planning documents as they relate to the Regional Transportation Plan.
24. Monitor the development of any plans for improvement of the Housatonic and Naugatuck rail lines in cooperation with other interest parties.
25. Coordinate activities of the NHCOG's Regional Engineer Program in cooperation with member towns for LOTCIP, the Rural Collector Program, and other activities.
26. Maintain the NHCOG's interactive website for the Regional Trail Map. Also continue to actively participate in planning activities for the Naugatuck River Greenway. Both projects promote tourism and enhance economic development opportunities.
27. Cooperate with ConnDOT to improve transportation system resiliency in the face of climate change and severe storm events and support the Department's climate change and resiliency planning efforts. Also participate in any planning and environmental linkages that ConnDOT is conducting in the region.
28. Coordinate with ConnDOT on transitioning to performance-based transportation planning and programming.
29. Pursue potential transit analysis pilot study and/or a regional transit strategy study.
30. Coordinate with other COGs on the Hartford TMA transportation efforts and other transportation activities.
31. Initiate preparation of an updated Regional Transportation Plan.

32. Explore complete street opportunities and provide technical assistance to municipalities in effort to provide a comprehensive, safe, integrated and connected multi-modal network of transportation options.

Products:

1. Advocacy of needed highway improvements as identified in the Regional Transportation Plan.
2. A written record of mandatory referrals addressing intermunicipal traffic impacts of proposed subdivision or zone change proposals.
3. Provision of liaison services between the Region's municipalities and the State, including assistance in the development and administration of the Rural Collector Program, LOTCIP Program, and other STP applications.
4. Provision of average daily traffic and other transportation related data upon request by local municipalities, businessmen, and others.
5. Preparation of quarterly reports on the utilization of existing commuter parking lots in the Region and additional needs which will be forwarded to CTDOT.
6. Periodic workshops for road foremen and supervisors in the regional area on roadway maintenance and improvement, training opportunities, and cooperative purchasing opportunities.
7. Coordination with State agencies in the implementation of the State Implementation Plan, STP projects, CTDOT's Land Use Forecast files, and ITS options.
8. Further development of GIS computerized mapping capabilities at the NHCOG office and development and enhancement of parcel mapping for towns in the region.
9. Regional legislative priority list which may include transportation needs.
10. Program administration of the "Northwest Hills Public Works Equipment Cooperative" including scheduling, monitoring, and financial management for the region's sweepers, catch basin cleaners, straw throwers, asphalt recyclers, asphalt hotboxes, and material screeners.
11. Promotion of the NHCOG's Regional Trail Map and Connectivity Assessment to promote economic development.
12. Coordination of activities conducted by the NHCOG's Regional Engineer.
13. Long term recovery planning in response to COVID-19, including enhanced transportation services.

- 14. Progress in planning for enhancement of the Naugatuck River Greenway.
- 15. Progress in updating the Regional Transportation Plan.

Staff Requirements

<u>FY 2024</u>	<u>FY 2025</u>
Executive Director: 75 hours	Executive Director: 75 hours
Deputy Director: 40 hours	Deputy Director: 40 hours
Transportation Director: 775 hours	Transportation Director: 775 hours
Finance Officer: 375 hours	Finance Officer: 375 hours
Program Manager/Office Manager: 40 hours	Program Manager/Office Manager: 40
Regional Planner/GIS Coordinator: 635 hours	Regional Planner/GIS Coordinator: 635

Consultant Costs

\$10,000 has been allocated under both the FY 2024 and FY 2025 SPR budgets for consultant assistance on yet to be determined priority planning projects.

TASK 2: Program Administration

Objectives:

To effectively administer the Council’s regional transportation planning program; to ensure that officials, organizations and citizens are given the opportunity for meaningful input into the transportation planning process; to encourage participation by persons or agencies who have an interest in particular studies, plans, programs, or projects; to comply with all equal employment opportunity and civil rights regulations, policies, and programs; and to ensure that all federal and state guidelines are followed with respect to grant administration and awarding of contracts.

Methodology:

1. Coordination meetings and discussions between NHCOG staff, the Northwestern CT Transit District, CTDOT and FHWA will take place as needed. Similar meetings will be held as appropriate with other interested parties such as civic groups, environmental organizations, freight shippers, private providers of transportation, pedestrian and bicycle advocates, and representatives of the disabled.
2. Quarterly progress and financial reports will be prepared and submitted to the appropriate government offices.
3. The annual work program will be prepared and reviewed with appropriate parties.
4. The annual audit report will be prepared and submitted to CTDOT for review and approval.

5. The Council will prepare reports on equal opportunity and citizen participation efforts for submittal to CTDOT as required.
6. Appropriate procedures will continue to be implemented to keep precise records relating to expenditure of transportation planning grant funds, such as weekly timesheets and quarterly financial and progress reports.
7. The time and place of monthly Council meetings will continue to be publicized, and meeting minutes will be prepared for public review.
8. Comments will be actively pursued from local officials and other interested parties on major transportation issues, the Regional Transportation Plan, and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.
9. Press releases will be prepared as appropriate on significant transportation planning issues and policies to facilitate public involvement in the planning process. Work products will also be posted on the NHCOG's website.
10. There will be continued cooperation with the local news media in the preparation of transportation related news articles by informing and explaining transportation issues, plans, proposals, and projects.
11. An opportunity for public comment will be provided at all regular Council meetings.
12. All reporting and other procedures will be complied with for implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, the Council's Affirmative Action Policy Statement, and the contract compliance regulations of the CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.
13. The Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) as developed by CTDOT will continue to be made available for public review at the NHCOG office to facilitate public involvement.

Products:

1. Quarterly progress and financial reports as required by CTDOT.
2. Improved citizen and minority involvement in the transportation planning process.
3. Equal opportunity and citizen participation reports as required by CTDOT.
4. Preparation of the annual transportation planning work program.
5. A record of meeting notices and Council minutes for public review.
6. Annual audit report.

Staff Requirements:

FY 2024
Executive Director: 100 hours
Deputy Director: 50 hours
Transportation Director: 1265 hours

FY 2025
Executive Director: 100 hours
Deputy Director: 50 hours
Transportation Director: 1265 hours

Finance Officer: 400 hours
 Program Manager/Office Manager: 60 hours
 Regional Planner: 800 hours

Finance Officer: 400 hours
 Program Manager/Office Manager: 60
 Regional Planner: 800 hours

SUMMARY OF FY 2024 SPR COSTS

	Task 1 Planning and Technical Assistance			Task 2 Program Administration		
	Billable			Billable		
	Hours	Rate	Cost	Hours	Rate	Cost
Executive Director	75	\$152	\$11,400	30	\$152	\$4,560
Deputy Director	40	\$142	\$5,680	10	\$142	\$1,420
Trans. Director	1000	\$133	\$133,000	265	\$133	\$35,245
Finance Officer	375	\$104	\$39,590	25	\$104	\$2,600
Program Manager	50	\$85	\$4,250	10	\$85	\$850
Regional Planner	750	\$104	\$78,000	50	\$104	\$5,075
	Subtotal		\$271,920			\$49,750
Consultant			\$10,000			
	TOTAL		\$281,920			\$49,750

SUMMARY OF FY 2025 SPR COSTS

	Task 1 Planning and Technical Assistance			Task 2 Program Administration		
	Billable			Billable		
	Hours	Rate	Cost	Hours	Rate	Cost
Executive Director	75	\$152	\$11,400	30	\$152	\$4,560
Deputy Director	40	\$142	\$5,680	10	\$142	\$1,420
Trans. Director	1000	\$133	\$133,000	265	\$133	\$35,245
Finance Officer	375	\$104	\$39,590	25	\$104	\$2,600
Program Manager	50	\$85	\$4,250	10	\$85	\$850
Regional Planner	750	\$104	\$78,000	50	\$104	\$5,075
	Subtotal		\$271,920			\$49,750
Consultant			\$10,000			
	TOTAL		\$281,920			\$49,750

IV. FTA WORK PROGRAM FINANCIAL SUMMARY - FY 2024 and FY 2025

<u>WORK PROGRAM ELEMENT ACTIVITY</u>	<u>Percent Of 2024 Work Program</u>	<u>FY 2024 Budget</u>	<u>FY 2025 Budget</u>
a. Regional Planning technical assistance (NHCOG).	61%	16,000	16,000
b. NHCOG assistance with installation of bus signs (FY 2020) and development of bus shelter plans for the NWT D (FY 2021).	12%	3,000	3,000
c. Technical assistance and coordination by NWT D to member towns, the general public and others on transit matters.	27%	7,500	7,500
TOTAL	100%	26,250	26,250

FUNDING SOURCES

<u>FY 2024</u>		<u>FY 2025</u>	
FTA	21,000	FTA	21,000
CTDOT	2,625	CTDOT	2,625
Local (NHCOG)	<u>2,625</u>	Local (NHCOG)	<u>2,625</u>
TOTAL	26,250	TOTAL	26,250

STAFF REQUIREMENTS

<u>FY 2024</u>	<u>FY 2025</u>
Executive Director: 12 hours	Executive Director: 12 hours
Transportation Director: 80 hours	Transportation Director: 80 hours
Finance Officer: 50 hours	Finance Officer: 50 hours
Program Manager: 13 hours	Program Manager: 13 hours

SUMMARY OF FY 2024 AND FY 2025 COSTS FOR FTA WORK PROGRAM

	<u>FY 2024</u>			<u>FY 2025</u>		
	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Billable Rate</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Billable Rate</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Executive Director	12	\$152	\$1,824	12	\$152	\$1,824
Trans. Director	80	\$133	\$10,640	80	\$133	\$10,640
Finance Officer	50	\$104	\$5,200	50	\$104	\$5,200
Program Manager	13	\$85	\$1,086	13	\$85	\$1,086
Subtotal			<u>\$18,750</u>			<u>\$18,750</u>
NWCTD Planning			\$7,500			\$7,500
TOTAL			\$26,250			\$26,250

V. FTA WORK PROGRAM TASK DESCRIPTION - FY 2024 and FY 2025

Objectives:

1. To provide ongoing technical and planning assistance on transit related matters to improve coordination of inter-regional and intra-regional transit and paratransit services.
2. To participate in planning and actions related to the Municipal Elderly and Disabled Grant Program, 5310 program, and the LOCHSTP program.
3. To facilitate installation of bus stop shelters and additional signs based on the NHCOG plan developed in cooperation with the NW Transit District.
5. Coordinate with service providers in administering and operating the minivan vehicles acquired by the NHCOG to enhance service to the elderly and disabled through the Rural Independent Transportation Service (RITS).
6. Assist CTDOT Bureau of Public Transportation by conducting commuter lot counts on a quarterly basis.

Methodology:

1. Cooperate and coordinate with the NWTB, CTDOT, and City of Torrington in pursuing the construction of a centralized transit facility in Torrington based on the Regional Transit Center Feasibility Study and Regional Transportation Plan. *(NHCOG)*
2. Continue to coordinate with the NWTB and social service agencies in planning for other facility or service upgrades such as those being supported by the LOCHSTP plan, 5310 Program, and the Municipal E&D Grant Program. In particular, actively participate in the update of the Locally Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (LOCHSTP) so that it addresses the priority needs of the transit providers in the region and complements Section 5310 planning. *(NHCOG)*
3. Pursue recommendations made in previous transit planning studies and the NHCOG Regional Transportation Plan that are eligible activities for the use of transit planning funds. *(NHCOG)*
4. Provide on-going technical and planning assistance to member towns, the general public, and others on transit related matters including the review and prioritization of applications for Section 5310 vehicles. *(NHCOG)*
5. Meet with town officials, the general public, state officials and others to discuss regional transit services, needs and priorities. Schedule meetings of area transit service providers as needed to discuss transit issues and opportunities for improved coordination as recommended in the NHCOG's Regional Transportation Plan. *(NHCOG and NWTB)*

6. Pursue further implementation of the NHCOG plan prepared to establish bus stop signs and shelters at selected locations along the “Candystriper” route in cooperation with the NW Transit District, CTDOT, and the City of Torrington. (*NHCOG and NWTD*)

Products:

1. Continued regional progress in bus facility and service planning.
2. Implementation of recommendations to improve regional transit operations, including the further implementation of a NHCOG plan for the establishment of bus signs and shelters at appropriate locations.
3. Continued technical and planning assistance on transit issues.
4. Improved outreach to transit service providers and others on transit issues and services.
5. Enhanced opportunities for elderly and disabled transportation through the use of minivans acquired by the NHCOG for the RITS program.

VI. FY 2024 and 2025 WORK PRODUCT SCHEDULE

	<u>TASK 1</u> <u>Planning and Technical Assistance</u>	<u>TASK 2</u> <u>Program Administration</u>
JULY	Continued Implementation of Northwest Hills Public Works Equipment Cooperative. Continued planning for Regional Transit Service.	
AUG.	Schedule Regional Transit Coordination Meetings as needed. Conduct traffic counts on local roads as needed.	
SEPT.	Schedule Road Supervisor Workshops, as needed. Pursue continued implementation of plan for bus stop signs and shelters. Conduct commuter lot survey and report.	Quarterly Reports and Financial Statements
OCT.	Assist in coordination of Rural Collector and LOTCIP Program projects.	Audit
DEC.	Coordinate with State agencies in development of the State Implementation Plan, STP projects, Environmental Justice, and ITS programs, as needed. Conduct commuter lot survey and report.	Quarterly Reports and Financial Statements
JAN.	Develop legislative priority list with consideration of regional transportation needs.	Affirmative Action Report
FEB.	Assist in preparing Land Use Forecast Files for CTDOT	
MARCH	Review Section 5310 applications. Conduct commuter lot survey and report. Provide ongoing advocacy of needed highway improvements based on Regional Transportation Plan.	Quarterly Reports and Financial Statements
APRIL	Monitor and administer Rural Collector and LOTCIP projects	Develop Annual Work Program
MAY	Progress in updating Regional Transportation Plan	
JUNE	Complete SPR and FTA planning program. Conduct commuter lot survey and report.	Quarterly Reports and Financial Statements

APPENDIX A

Description of Employee Duties

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR -

As chief administrator and planner, prepares and administers, under the guidance of the Council, the agency’s work program, budget, and policies; coordinates Council planning programs and activities; exercises overall direction of professional and support staff; reviews staff work; manages personnel matters; initiates action for application for federal and state grants; coordinates and develops public relations and informational programs; meets with community groups and governmental officials concerning Council's objectives; coordinates and supervises Council projects with staff and consultants; coordinates Council projects with state and federal agencies.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR / COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR -

Assists the Executive Director in the administration and supervision of the activities of the Council; assists in the implementation and coordination of Council objectives: carries out the duties of the Executive Director in his or her absence or inability to function; does related work as required. Assists in the formulation, coordination, and administration of policies and objectives; organizes and participates in meetings related to Council activities; conducts research and analysis for report preparation; organizes and participates in meetings and conferences related to Council programs; provides advisory and technical assistance to local officials and organizations; assists in the supervision of the Council professional planning and supportive staff.

TRANSPORTATION DIRECTOR -

Analyzes and evaluates data on natural resources and transit for regional planning. Prepares and provides advisory and informational assistance, analysis and research data for local officials, citizens, and consultants on topics such as: GIS, climate change, natural hazard mitigation, water quality protection, water utility coordination, and transit planning and coordination. Prepares background studies and memoranda; attends meetings; performs quantitative analysis of regional planning data, prepares reports and studies of regional planning activities; makes oral presentations of planning studies and program progress; research best management practices and additional funding opportunities. Assists with various financial management activities, helps coordinate media presentation technology, updates website, serves as Title VI Coordinator, and prepares meeting minutes.

SENIOR REGIONAL PLANNER -

Analyzes and evaluates data on natural resources and transit for regional planning. Prepares and provides advisory and informational assistance, analysis and research data for local officials, citizens, and consultants on topics such as: GIS, climate change, natural hazard mitigation, water quality protection, water utility coordination, and transit planning and coordination. Prepares background studies, newsletters, and memoranda; attends meetings; performs quantitative analysis of regional planning data, prepares reports and studies of regional planning activities; makes oral presentations of planning studies and program progress; research best management practices and additional funding opportunities. Assists with various

financial management activities, helps coordinate media presentation technology, updates website, and prepares meeting minutes.

FINANCE OFFICER –

Duties include the financial administration of the agency which include the coordination with staff on work program development and maintenance including but not limited to budgeting, audit, billing, payments, payroll, and support of personnel resources. He or she may also be responsible for various planning support activities as determined by the Executive Director. Some of the duties may include the development of specialized transportation and agency financial reports and budget programming for NHCOG projects.

FINANCE MANAGER -

Maintains general ledger, journals and all other fiscal records and reports in accordance with federal and state bookkeeping and auditing standards. Responsible for accounts receivable. Coordinates with Administrative Assistance in preparing project financial reports; contract reimbursements; quarterly FICA, FWT and unemployment reports; and monthly balance sheets. Maintains Council checking and savings accounts. Responsible for invoicing various grants and contracts and the preparation of related quarterly financial reports. Manages the financial aspects of various regional programs such as the Prescription Assistance Program, NW Corner Fuel Bank, Housatonic River Commission, NW CT Regional Housing Council, makes all deposits, withdrawals, and fund transfers. Maintains an inventory of office equipment and furniture. Uses personal computer for fiscal applications. Assists the Executive Director with regional emergency planning elements developed by DEMHS. Coordinates with auditor for fiscal year reporting.

PROGRAM MANAGER -

Provides advisory and informational assistance, analysis and research data for local officials, citizens, and consultants on topics such as: GIS, climate change, natural hazard mitigation, water quality protection, water utility coordination, and transit planning and coordination. Prepares background studies, newsletters, and memoranda; attends meetings; performs quantitative analysis of regional planning data, prepares reports and studies of regional planning activities; makes oral presentations of planning studies and program progress; research best management practices and additional funding opportunities. Assists with various fiscal management activities, helps coordinate media presentation technology, updates website, and prepares meeting minutes.

REGIONAL PLANNER -

Research sources of data regarding sociological, economic, and financial factors of community development; ability to do technical research and comprehensive studies in areas related to planning; considerable ability to prepare technical written reports. Ability to make and interpret sketches, designs, maps and detailed drawings; ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with associates and with the public; ability in written and oral expression. Regional planning versatility essential. Capable with personal computers, ArcGIS, social media, and word processing and spreadsheet applications. Strong time management and organizational skills. Ability to interpret and evaluate public policies and regulations and office financial matters.

GIS COORDINATOR - Assist in coordinating the collection, compilation, and dissemination of geographic information systems data from and to state agencies and the municipalities within the Northwest Hills COG region. Administer the creation of and acquisition of GIS data, including project management and resources for aerial imagery, elevation, and parcel information. Prepare materials for reports, presentations and other resources about regional GIS progress and planning efforts. Assist in stakeholder engagement and coordination to support use and dissemination of geospatial data and perform other related duties as required.

OFFICE MANAGER -

Assist with daily office Prepares correspondence, memos, meeting notices and reports; data entry in various computer application, including Excel and Access: responsible for managing office equipment i.e. fax, copier, scanner, telephone system, etc. Other duties include maintaining organizational records, Outlook database, organizes logistics for various meetings, files and office supply inventory as well as placing public notices and media releases. Assists with general clerical functions as needed including taking minutes of various meetings such as telephone answering and filing. Prepares meeting minutes.

Appendix B
CONNECTICUT'S PROCESS
FOR CONSULTATION AND COOPERATION
WITH LOCAL OFFICIALS
IN NON-METROPOLITAN AREAS
March 2021

Purpose and Background

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (Department) has, for the past 25 years, involved the Rural Regional Planning Organizations, now referred to as the Rural Council of Governments (rural COGs), in the preparation of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). In 23 CFR 450.210 there is a requirement that each State develop a documented process for consulting with non-metropolitan local officials in the statewide transportation planning process. The following process is designed to fulfill this requirement by documenting the involvement of the rural COGs in the statewide transportation planning process.

Specifically, 23 CFR 450.210(b) states that “The State shall have a documented process(es) for cooperating with nonmetropolitan local officials representing units of general purpose local government and/or local officials with responsibility for transportation that is separate and discrete from the public involvement process and provides an opportunity for their participation in the development of the long-range statewide transportation plan and the STIP.” There are two rural COGs in the state of Connecticut: Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments and the Northwest Hills Council of Governments. In accordance with Connecticut General Statutes, COG Boards are made up of local elected officials; therefore, local governments in the rural areas are involved, and will continue to be involved in the Transportation Planning Process through their participation in the rural COGs.

The Department’s Council of Governments (COG) Coordination section serves as the liaison between the Department and the rural COGs and consists of a staff of full-time liaisons. The liaisons are assigned to specific COGs to enable them to develop both ongoing and mutually beneficial relationships with the local elected officials, as well as a good working knowledge of the issues and concerns specific to each region. The liaisons attend COG Transportation and Board meetings and are in continuous communication with the rural COG staff.

The rural COG Boards help the Department to coordinate transportation planning, research, project selection and project development, and help to resolve inter-municipal transportation issues. Each fiscal year, the Department provides state and federal planning funds to the rural COGs for highway and transit planning. The Department also assists the rural COGs in developing their Unified Planning Work Programs (UPWPs) that identify the major transportation issues in their regions and outline the planning tasks necessary to address them. In addition, the rural COGs conduct other transportation planning activities,

such as undertaking transit and highway corridor studies, and providing technical assistance to local municipalities.

Regional Transportation Plan

To ensure statewide planning coverage, the Department recommends and encourages each rural COG to update its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) every four years, which is consistent with the requirement on the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in non-attainment areas to update their Metropolitan Transportation Plans [23 CFR 450.324(c)]. As the rural COGs develop their RTP's, there is ongoing coordination and consultative review of and comment on the documents by the Department prior to adoption by the Region. The needs and priorities identified in the RTPs and MTPs are taken into consideration in the development of the State's Long-Range Transportation Plan

Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

The Department drafts the STIP for rural portions of the state, consistent with 23 CFR 450.218(c). Member towns submit projects through their rural COGs for eventual inclusion in the STIP under several federal programs (Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)-Other Urban, STBG-Rural, STBG-Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ), and the Scenic Byways Program). The Department scopes the proposed projects and, depending on complexity, need, and funding availability, includes them in the draft STIP. The Department submits the draft STIP to the rural COGs for review and comment on the projects listed for their area. The rural COGs make this document available to the elected officials of their member towns, as well as to the public, for local review and discussion at publicly noticed rural COG meetings. There is also a review and comment period of 30 days for any Statewide Transportation Improvement Program amendments and a 14-day review period for actions submitted to a rural COG by the Department. Any comments forwarded to the Department by the rural COGs are addressed, and the rural portion of the STIP is incorporated into the final STIP.

The Department's Office of Capital Services coordinates with the Rural Transit Districts' Executive Director/Manager and the Department's Bureau of Public Transportation who oversees the transit services provided by the Rural Transit Districts to ensure their capital and operating needs are met. The FTA Section 5311 capital and operating projects are programmed in the Department's 5-year Capital Plan. The projects programmed in the Capital Plan for the Rural Transit District are then submitted to the STIP unit for approval by the rural COGs and eventually incorporated into STIP.

Project solicitation

STBG-Rural Funding is made available to each rural COG through the Department's STP-Rural Major/Minor Collector Program. Funding has been increased from \$1 million to \$2 million per year, and the non-federal share to municipalities has been decreased from 20 percent to 10 percent with the Department absorbing the additional 10 percent. A portion of

CMAQ funding is set aside for the rural COGs and MPOs for projects selected on a competitive basis. STBG TAP rural funds are also available to the Rural COGs for projects selected on a competitive basis. It is the rural COG's responsibility to solicit its member towns and to develop projects for all three of these programs.

Capital Plan

The Department develops a yearly draft 5-year Capital Plan which is consistent with the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and also reflects projects and programs authorized by the legislature. The Rural COGs are asked to review and comment on this draft list of projects to continue the consultation process on the selection of projects for the outer years of the Plan.

Additional Consultation

The Department uses other methods to have ongoing and recurring consultation with rural COGs. It holds rural COG and the MPO Quarterly Coordination Meetings at the Department with an option to participate remotely and holds monthly COG Teleconference Meetings during the other eight months of the year. These meetings provide a forum for the rural COGs, MPOs, the CTDOT and the USDOT to discuss and find solutions to common problems and present and discuss relevant information. The Department requests that each rural COG review and comment on the draft Statewide LRTP and on the Department's draft Capital Plan. In each of its four Districts, the Department has a Municipal Systems Action Team (MSAT) that assists the municipalities with the construction administration required on Federally funded projects.

Attachment C

Northwest Hills Council of Governments Public Participation Plan

Introduction

The Northwest Hills Council of Governments (NHCOG) is committed to an ongoing dialogue with the residents of the Northwest Hills region, especially with respect to transportation planning and other programs and projects. This plan lays the groundwork for successful outreach, exchange, and implementation of that dialogue.

NHCOG is one of nine regional councils of governments in Connecticut. Twenty-one towns comprise the NHCOG region, including: Barkhamsted, Burlington, Canaan, Colebrook, Cornwall, Goshen, Harwinton, Hartland, Kent, Litchfield, Morris, New Hartford, Norfolk, North Canaan, Roxbury, Salisbury, Sharon, Torrington, Warren, Washington, and Winchester.

In terms of transportation in the Northwest Hills Region, the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) is the leading state agency. ConnDOT provides funding to the NHCOG to facilitate planning work for the transportation resources in the region.

This Public Participation Plan is intended to provide direction for public involvement activities to be conducted by NHCOG and contains the policies, objectives, and techniques used by the NHCOG for public involvement. In its public participation process, the NHCOG will:

- Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agencies, private providers of transportation, and other interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs and projects.
- Give adequate public notice of public participation activities and allow time for public review and comment at key decision points.
- Ensure that the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 are met and that appropriate actions are taken during all phases of public involvement to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Evaluate and continuously review the public participation process.

The NHCOG has an extremely small variance in race, color, national origin, and English proficiency and public participation is solicited without discrimination in the process of developing any plan or project.

Plan Objectives

The NHCOG believes that public input into its planning process is valuable. Planning is

intended to provide a two-way process of information and idea sharing with the public and directly affected communities. This Public Participation Plan is designed with the following goal: “Open access and effective communication leads to knowledgeable, informed stakeholders.”

The NHCOG will raise the level of understanding of the transportation planning process by seeking out under-involved populations within the NHCOG, including minority, low income, senior citizen and immobile populations. It will target different audiences for planning, as necessary, including residents, businesses, and under-served and under-represented populations, and hold public meetings at sites convenient to potentially affected citizens. It will promote meetings in a manner appropriate to the population groups from which communication is desired.

The NHCOG will keep the public informed of on-going activities on a continuous basis, using a variety of written and graphic means.

- Make all publications and work products available electronically to the public via the NHCOG website (www.northwesthillscog.org) and at the NHCOG offices.
- Website shall be updated and maintained to provide the most current and accurate information available. The website will, at a minimum, contain the following information:
 - Contact information (mailing address, phone, and fax)
 - Meeting calendars, minutes, and agendas
 - Staff will be available to provide general and project-specific information at a central location during normal business hours and after hours at the request of community interest groups with reasonable notice.

The NHCOG will strive to continuously improve public participation and will revise this Plan and participation mechanisms as necessary to make them most effective. The Plan will be reviewed and adopted, with revisions, if necessary, at least every five (5) years in order to improve the effectiveness of public involvement.

Public Participation Techniques

Public participation is an ongoing activity of the NHCOG, including the regular posting and copying of notices and reports in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. This section describes the optional public participation tools currently available for use by the NHCOG.

Website	Legal Advertised Notices	Press Releases
Public Hearings	Surveys	Project
Workshops	Comment and Complaint Procedure	
Public Contacts Database	Partner Agencies	Social Media

Using one or more of these techniques, the intent is to expose and engage the public in general or even target certain population groups or neighborhoods to issues and proposals being considered, including, but not limited to:

- Age, gender, education, income and race/ethnic-specific issues
- Potential environmental areas and issues
- The various users of all modes of the transportation system in NHCOG

The following are the specific techniques that could be used, but others could be added as necessary. Not all will be used for every communication with the public or at every meeting. However, the intent is to provide reasonable information about the proposals being considered and the discussions that are taking place.

Website

The website will be utilized to provide basic information relating to meetings dates and times on various topics, such as transportation planning. Specifically, it will include documents relating to Title VI, such as the Public Participation Plan, Limited English Proficiency Plan, and helpful links to other transportation related sites at the local, state, and national level such as Unified Planning Work Program, State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), and Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRP). The website will be maintained by the NHCOG and regularly updated. Additionally, the site will be compliant with Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act for disabled users.

Public Contacts Database

The NHCOG will maintain a master database of individuals interested in planning in NHCOG region, including those that have an interest in transportation issues. The database will include contact information to be used for electronic meeting notification and announcements. The database will be used to enhance any or all public involvement activities.

The database will include contacts for:

- Elected Officials & Local Government Staff
- Transportation Agencies (public, non-profit, private)
- Local Media
- Civic & Special Interest Groups
- Federal, State and local land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, historic preservation and other environmental agencies
- Public and private environmental organizations
- Public transportation providers, including Northwestern CT Transit District and social service transportation providers
- Private Providers of Transportation
- Representatives of Users of Public Transportation, Pedestrians, and Bicycle Groups
- Representatives of the Disabled

- Other interests as may from time-to-time be active and interested in the planning and development of the transportation network and/or the environment.
- The NHCOG will, when appropriate, electronically mail meeting announcements to the contact list or to targeted groups for upcoming activities.

Legal Advertised Notices

Notification of all meetings, both regular and special, shall conform to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act (CGS Section 1-21). All meeting notices and agendas are sent to the municipal clerks, media and other interested parties the prior week or as soon as the meeting notice is ready in accordance with FOIA. Annually, the schedules of all regular meetings of the NHCOG Board for the upcoming calendar year are sent to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT), municipal clerks of member towns and to any interested parties. An interpreter for the hearing-impaired or Limited English Proficient can be made available if requested at least five working days prior to the meeting.

When NHCOG action is required on the State's TIP or on a TIP amendment, the agenda will include a brief description of the project. Each regular meeting agenda includes an opportunity for public comment, and this is clearly indicated on the agenda that is distributed in advance of the meeting.

All required legal notices will be made in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and advertised in the Republican American newspaper or other publications as appropriate.

Press Releases

Press releases will be sent to the Republican American, Register Citizen, Winsted Journal, and Lakeville Journal to announce upcoming meetings and activities and to provide information on specific issues being considered by the NHCOG. When specific communities are affected by transportation plans, local newsletters and media will be sought to communicate the project status.

Public Meeting and Hearings

These are formal public meetings used to solicit specific public comment on a project or issue being considered for adoption by the NHCOG. Hearings provide a formal setting for citizens to provide comments to decision-making bodies. Meeting minutes are taken and maintained, and language assistance will be available, if requested in advance.

A public information meeting and/or public hearing shall be held prior to the adoption of any Plan for the purpose of both providing information and receiving public comment.

The notice of a public information meeting or hearing shall include the date, time, place and subject of the meeting, and shall indicate where subject documents can be reviewed in advance of the meeting. Copies of the subject documents shall be made available at the

NHCOG office and, if possible, through the NHCOG website.

Where possible, public meetings and hearings will be held in places that are convenient to alternate transportation modes. Regional residents may utilize the Dial-A-Ride services of the Northwest Transit District, if necessary.

Special assistance, if required, will be made available upon request at least five (5) calendar days prior to the event. All public hearing notices and advertisements shall state the following, “If you require special assistance to attend or participate in this meeting or need additional information, please contact a NHCOG representative noted below five (5) days prior to the meeting event so that the special assistance can be accommodated.” The NHCOG will include language in its public notices and advertisements relating to nondiscrimination and avenues of redress if an individual feels they have been discriminated against. All public meeting notices and advertisements shall state the following:

NHCOG hearings are conducted in accessible locations and materials can be provided in accessible formats. If you would like special accommodations, such as an interpreter, please contact the NHCOG at 860-491-9884 or sbetter@northwesthillscog.org at least 5 days prior to the meeting. The NHCOG fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. The NHCOG does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, English proficiency, income, religious creed, ancestry, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, military service, or gender identity or expression. Any person who believes himself/herself or any specific class of persons have been subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI or related statutes or regulations, may himself/herself or via a representative, file a complaint with the NHCOG.

Public Workshops

These are targeted public meetings that are generally open and informal, with project team members interacting with the public on a one-on-one basis. Short presentations may be given at these meetings, but their intent is to relay project information to the public and to solicit public comment and a sense of public priorities. Where possible, workshops will be held in places that are convenient to alternate transportation modes. Special assistance, if required, will be made available upon request at least 5 calendar days prior to the event. All public meeting notices and advertisements shall state the following, “If you require special assistance to attend or participate in this meeting or need additional information, please contact a NHCOG representative noted below ten days prior to the meeting event so that the special assistance can be accommodated.”

Partner Agencies

NHCOG works with several agencies and groups on a variety of projects. Where possible and appropriate, partner agencies including local, regional, state, and federal organizations will also be encouraged to conduct outreach through their typical methods (mailing, electronic, notices,

etc.) to reach interested stakeholder groups. Partner agencies include but are not limited to: Northwestern Connecticut Transit District, Northwest Connecticut Economic Development Corporation, Northwest Connecticut Chamber of Commerce, local economic development groups, and Planning & Zoning Commissions.

Surveys

Occasionally, NHCOG will conduct surveys to solicit opinions. Surveys can be used when very specific input from the public is desired. A survey can be used to garner public opinion on specific issues or options (such as whether a person supports a specific alignment in a corridor study). Surveys are also used to gather technical GIS data during corridor and planning studies. Phone and mail surveys are the most common methods to be used, along with meeting comment cards. Efforts will be made to reach interested parties throughout the region. NHCOG will be especially conscious to incorporate the Environmental Justice communities in the region in their survey outreach.

Social Media

NHCOG will utilize social media tools as available and as appropriate to invite interested parties to participate in regional efforts.

Comment and Complaint Procedure

NHCOG offers the Comment and Complaint Procedure under separate cover.

Evaluation Methods

In order to determine the effectiveness of the public involvement tools, they must be evaluated on a periodic basis. This Public Participation Plan will be reviewed and adopted, with revisions, if necessary, at least every five (5) years in order to improve the effectiveness of public involvement. Informal evaluations will be on an informal basis at least once a year. Such evaluations will be sufficiently detailed to guide the activities of the next program year. Effectiveness of the programs will be based on:

- The number of published articles, notices or other public notices of transportation activities and meetings
- The number and frequency of targeted population groups from which input is received
- The number of people attending meetings
- Feedback from meeting attendees and stakeholder groups

Overall, the NHCOG will continually strive to improve public involvement. Improvements should be made to increase public awareness and to improve the quantity and quality of information provided to the public.