



## NOTICE OF REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

### Leave today's meeting with:

- *Continuation of the MSW Discussion with the Commissioner of CT DEEP*
- *CT Council of Small Towns (COST) and CT Conference of Municipalities (CCM)'s Legislative Priorities and Monitoring for the 2024 Short Session.*
- *An Understanding of the Current Local Bridge Program as it Impacts Your Town.*
- *Next Steps on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Update and Why It is Important for Your Town.*
- *Furthering Housing Diversity and Choice in Your Community*

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**DATE:** Thursday, January 11, 2024

**TIME:** 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

**LOCATION:** ZOOM-<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89372248102?pwd=bk5qcW1BcGRiN1RSNVVZemhiUkxXZz09>  
Meeting ID: 893 7224 8102  
Passcode: 412413  
Call-in Option: 1-309-205-3325

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## AGENDA

*(Chairman Dan Jerram; Vice Chairman Mike Criss; Secretary Patrick Roy; Treasurer Tom Weik)*

- 10:00 AM Call to Order and Opportunity for Public Comment **Dan Jerram, Chair.**
- 10:05 AM Report of the Executive Director, **Rob Phillips**
- ED Activity Log – December (*Attachment A*)
  - Capacity Building for Grant Acquisition Assistance
  - Potential Update on TRIP
- 10:10 AM Discussion of Regional Infrastructure Projects for the draft CEDS Update (*Attachment B*), **Rista Malanca, NHCOC**
- 10:20 AM Outlook for the Upcoming 2024 Legislative Short Session and Emerging Priorities, **Betsy Gara, COST / Brian O'Connor and Randy Collins, CCM.**

- 10:40 AM Community Engagement Grant Linking Regional Land Trusts with Housing Organizations and Town Leaders to Create Shared Purpose & Mapping of Priority Areas for Conservation & Feasibility of Affordable Housing, **Jocelyn Ayer, Director, Litchfield County Center for Housing Opportunity.**
- 10:50 AM Summary of the State Local Bridge Program ‘*Post Program Overhaul*’ and How it Can Aid in Municipal Projects, **Andrew Shields, Transportation Engineer, CT DOT**
- 11:20 AM Discussion and Q&A with CT DEEP on MSW, **Commissioner Katie Dykes.**
- 11:40 AM Connect your Municipality to the CEN Network Through a Free Fiber Build Which Utilizes ARPA Funds, **Wendy Rego and Paul Tarsa, CEN.**
- 11:50 AM DEMHS Update, **Henry Paszczuk, DEMHS Region 5**
- 11:55 AM Administrative Items:
- a) **ACTION** - Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes for the December 14, 2023, Regular Meeting (*Attachment C*)
  - b) **ACTION** - Approval of Financial Statements for November (*Attachment D*)
- 12:00 PM Open Discussion and Advisement for the Benefit of the NHCOC Membership
- Meeting Adjournment.



## **ATTACHMENT A**

### **MEMORANDUM**

**To: NHCOC Board**  
**From: Robert A Phillips, Executive Director**  
**Date: January 11, 2024**  
**Re: Meeting Activity Log of the Executive Director**

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Please find the Executive Director's general activity log for meetings and discussions relating to the noted topics **since the December 14<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting of FY23-24**. If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, please contact me at [rphillips@northwesthillscog.org](mailto:rphillips@northwesthillscog.org) or via phone at 860-491-9884.

#### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- Met with EcDev CEDS leadership group on CEDS plan development timeframes.
- Coordinated with Rista and SHI, the consultant on our CEDS virtual engagement process.
- Met with potential consultant on data trending needs for the CEDS.
- Attended monthly Chamber meeting remotely.

#### **LAND USE PLANNING/PRESERVATION/CONSERVATION**

- Met with Winsted Health Care Center Representatives to discuss project including affordable housing and share workspace initiatives.
- Coordinated with member and adjacent towns on land use regulation referrals.

#### **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**



- Met with the state GIS office on Addressing needs in the region for emergency services.
- Held R5 REPT Steering Committee Meeting.

### **TRANSPORTATION/PUBLIC WORKS**

- Met with Road Super Chair, Raz Alexe, to discuss RoadSoft Product and the potential benefits to the region given the cost investment.

### **OTHER NHCOCG TOPICS**

- Met with Gordon Ridgeway, 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman of Cornwall to discuss the COG and CEDS.
- Met with CIRMA to discuss organizational crime policy.
- Attended CCM Legislative Committee Meeting for Emerging Priorities.
- Attended MIRA Finance Meeting for the Planned Dissolution.
- Attended a forum on UBP for MSW Solutions.
- Met with Janet Carlson and staff to discuss Website Architectural Overhaul
- Met with Cynthia Rines of MY OFFICE, LLC for bookkeeping purposes.
- Participated in multiple phone conversations with the state, towns, residents, and other stakeholders in the region on demand.

## ATTACHMENT B



January 4, 2024

To: NHCOC Board Members  
From: Rista Malanca, AICP  
RE: CEDS Update

Dear NHCOC Board Members,

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Strategic Planning Committee met on December 20, 2023 to discuss regional economic development goals and initiatives. This Committee is scheduled to meet again on January 10, 2024 to further develop goals and begin developing a vision statement.

I'm attaching documents for your review. Your feedback is encouraged, please email or call me with your thoughts, questions and ideas on any of the information provided.

At your next COG meeting I'd like to specifically discuss:

- The "List of Priority Regional Infrastructure Projects" that will become an appendix to the CEDS. Are there any projects in your community that should be on the list, that aren't? Are there any projects listed that should be revised or removed?
- Your thoughts on the Vision Statement. Do you have a word or phrase you think should describe the region as it should be in 10 years?
- To document we have broad based representation providing input into the development of the CEDS, we have put together a "Member Representation Form". Many individuals, like yourself, will represent multiple areas ... for example you may be a 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman, but also a business owner and also on a Volunteer Board. Please complete the attached form and send back to me at your earliest convenience.

Enclosed are the following documents:

1. Summary of Survey Results as of January 2, 2024
2. **Draft** Overview of trends and impact of the Pandemic
3. Table of draft goals and action steps
4. Draft (red-lined version) List of Priority Regional Infrastructure Projects
5. Blank member representation form
6. A recording of the 12/20/23 Committee meeting can be found here:  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/u\\_zNpcjNdNmrQtE\\_hJd-c2FONPb9vzcdw\\_rTn5NsoMPQKBtRSppuZl2ZwNEBtLYw.uVnncgaF6Jzcg6v6](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/u_zNpcjNdNmrQtE_hJd-c2FONPb9vzcdw_rTn5NsoMPQKBtRSppuZl2ZwNEBtLYw.uVnncgaF6Jzcg6v6)  
Passcode: Tk.pv.18

Sincerely,  
  
Rista Malanca, AICP  
Director of Community & Economic Development



# Default Report

Explore the data behind your survey responses. Gain a better perspective of your survey data and uncover insights for further planning.



Visited

**380**



Started

**113**



Avg. Time to Complete

**5m**



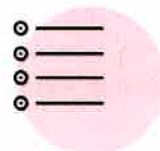
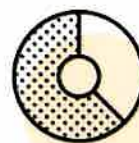
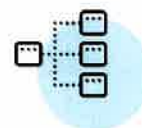
Completed

**113**



Completion Rate

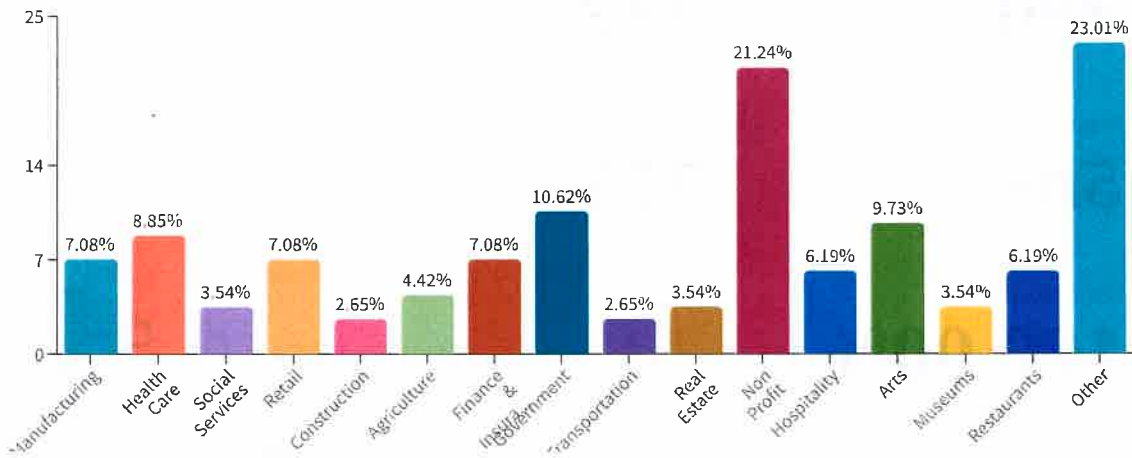
**100.00%**



QUESTION 01 | MULTIPLE CHOICE

# What industry/sector do you work in?

Answered: 113 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
Manufacturing	8	7.08 %
Health Care	10	8.85 %
Social Services	4	3.54 %
Retail	8	7.08 %
Construction	3	2.65 %
Agriculture	5	4.42 %
Finance & Insurance	8	7.08 %
Government	12	10.62 %
Transportation	3	2.65 %
Real Estate	4	3.54 %
Non Profit	24	21.24 %

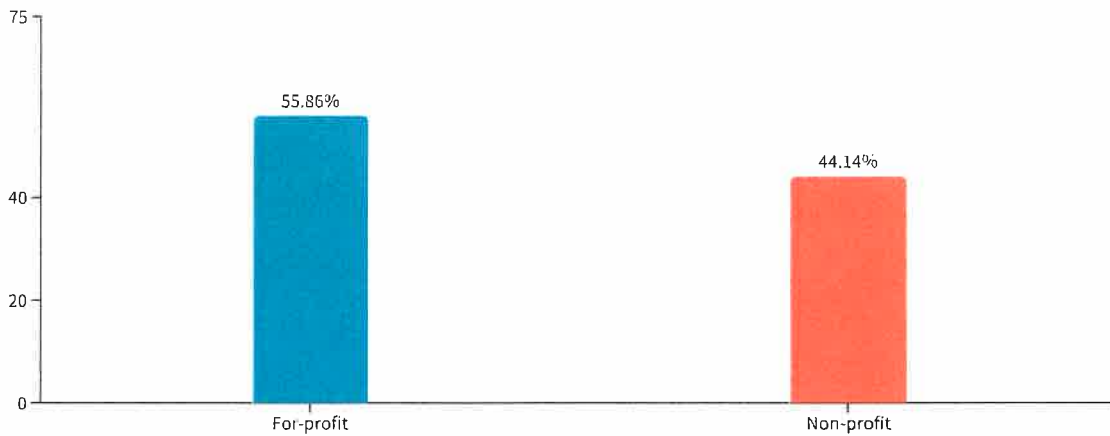


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
Hospitality	7	6.19 %
Arts	11	9.73 %
Museums	4	3.54 %
Restaurants	7	6.19 %
Other	26	23.01 %

QUESTION 02 | MULTIPLE CHOICE

# Is your organization for-profit or non-profit?

Answered: 111 Skipped: 2

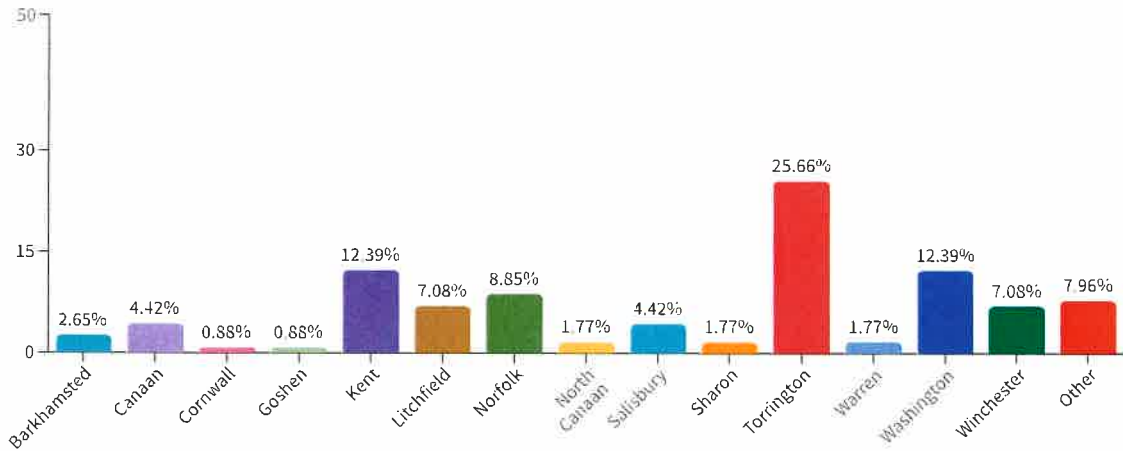


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
For-profit	62	55.86 %
Non-profit	49	44.14 %

QUESTION 03 | MULTIPLE CHOICE

# Which town is your business located in?

Answered: 113 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
Barkhamsted	3	2.65 %
Canaan	5	4.42 %
Cornwall	1	0.88 %
Goshen	1	0.88 %
Kent	14	12.39 %
Litchfield	8	7.08 %
Norfolk	10	8.85 %
North Canaan	2	1.77 %
Salisbury	5	4.42 %
Sharon	2	1.77 %
Torrington	29	25.66 %

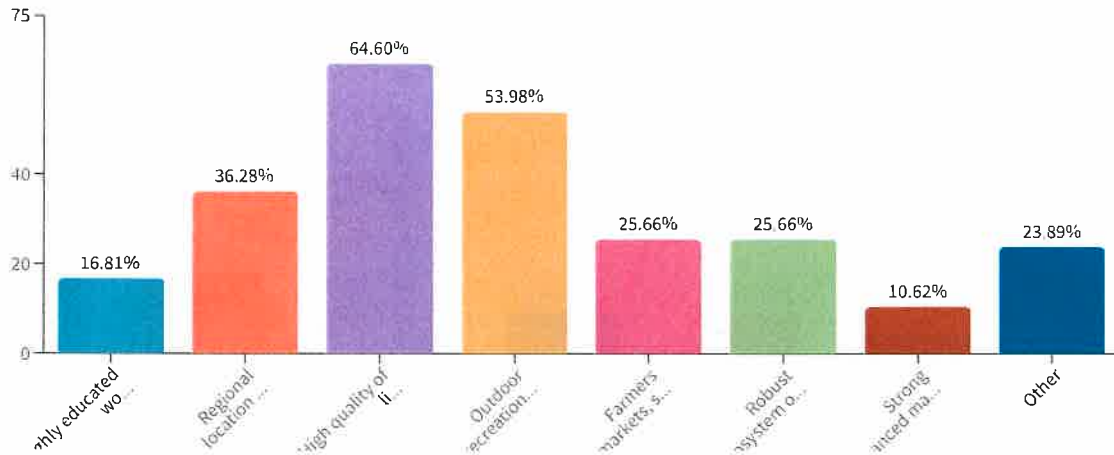
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
Warren	2	1.77 %
Washington	14	12.39 %
Winchester	8	7.08 %
Other	9	7.96 %

QUESTION 04 | MULTIPLE CHOICE

# What are the top three advantages of doing business in the region?

Please choose three.

Answered: 113 Skipped: 0

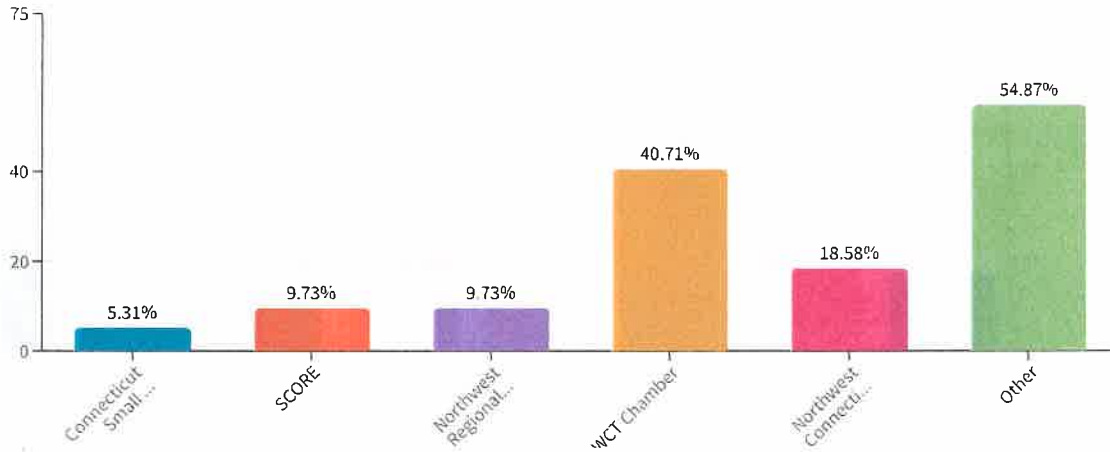


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
Highly educated workforce	19	16.81 %
Regional location with access to NYC and Boston markets	41	36.28 %
High quality of life	73	64.60 %
Outdoor recreational amenities, including hiking, biking, skiing, and boating	61	53.98 %
Farmers markets, small farms, and a regional Food Hub	29	25.66 %
Robust ecosystem of support for small businesses, entrepreneurs, and start-ups	29	25.66 %
Strong advanced manufacturing and health care sectors	12	10.62 %
Other	27	23.89 %

QUESTION 05 | MULTIPLE CHOICE

What regional resources have you taken advantage of to help improve your business?

Answered: 113 Skipped: 0

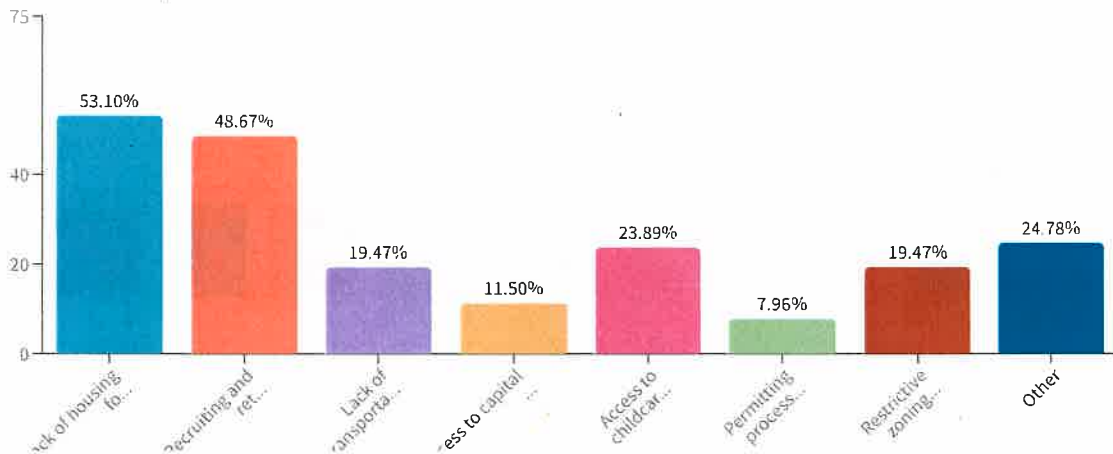


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
Connecticut Small Business Development Center	6	5.31 %
SCORE	11	9.73 %
Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board	11	9.73 %
NWCT Chamber	46	40.71 %
Northwest Connecticut Community College	21	18.58 %
Other	62	54.87 %

QUESTION 06 | MULTIPLE CHOICE

What challenges are you facing that makes it difficult for you to do business in the region?

Answered: 113 Skipped: 0



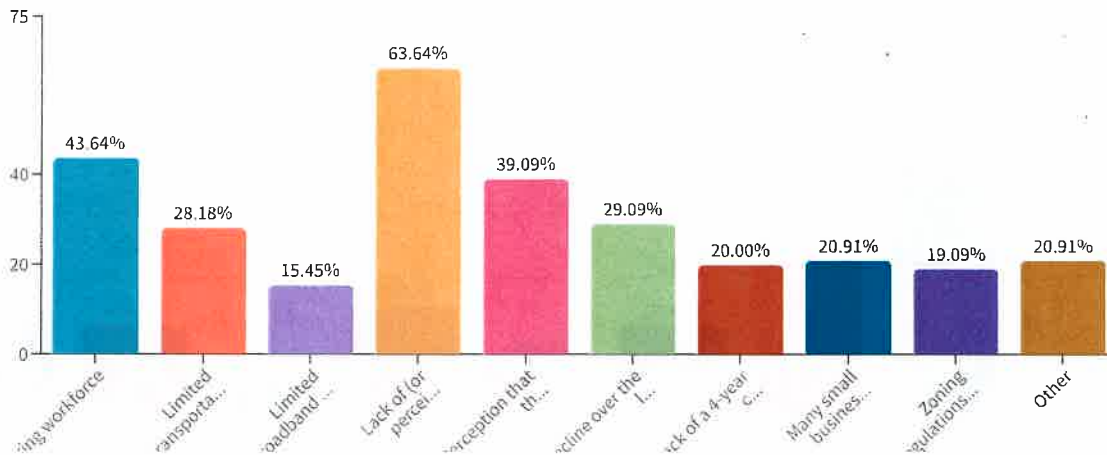
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
Lack of housing for employees	60	53.10 %
Recruiting and retaining workforce	55	48.67 %
Lack of transportation for employees	22	19.47 %
Access to capital for businesses & startups	13	11.50 %
Access to childcare and early childhood education for employees	27	23.89 %
Permitting process difficult to navigate	9	7.96 %
Restrictive zoning regulations	22	19.47 %
Other	28	24.78 %

QUESTION 07 | MULTIPLE CHOICE

# What concerns you the most about the region?

Please pick your top 3 biggest concerns

Answered: 110 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
Aging workforce	48	43.64 %
Limited transportation options (for both employees and products)	31	28.18 %
Limited broadband infrastructure	17	15.45 %
Lack of (or perceived lack of) housing that is affordable to existing and potential workforce	70	63.64 %
Perception that there "are no jobs in NWCT"	43	39.09 %
Decline over the last 15 years in region's overall economic prosperity (failure to keep pace with national growth rates)	32	29.09 %
Lack of a 4-year college that keeps young people in the region	22	20.00 %



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE PERCENTAGE
Many small businesses don't know about or don't use CT SBDC, SCORE, NWRWIB and other services for business planning, attracting/ training employees, capital needs, etc.	23	20.91 %
Zoning regulations may not be friendly for home-based businesses	21	19.09 %
Other	23	20.91 %

QUESTION 08 | TEXT

Is there anything else you like us to know?

Answered: 113 Skipped: 0



Anonymous	2 Hours ago
no	
Anonymous	3 Days ago
N/a	
Anonymous	3 Days ago
No	
Anonymous	3 Days ago
Norfolk is 82% Forest and pasture. That portion of our town needs to pull its weight economically. Outdoor recreation is key. (Example: Norbrook Brewery bike trails and disk golf. ... build it and they will come!)	
Anonymous	4 Days ago
No	
Anonymous	4 Days ago
no	
Anonymous	4 Days ago
No	

<b>Anonymous</b>	4 Days ago
Please emphasize that new/affordable housing should be located in village centers. We do not want sprawl ruining our beautiful rural landscape.	
<b>Anonymous</b>	4 Days ago
N/A	
<b>Anonymous</b>	4 Days ago
no	
<b>Anonymous</b>	4 Days ago
no	
<b>Anonymous</b>	4 Days ago
towns aging demographics are using services that arent being staffed, Long Dr office appts, emergency services, affordability in region	
<b>Anonymous</b>	4 Days ago
Need to attract young families who can afford and enjoy living, working and stimulating/educating/entertaining themselves and their children here.	
<b>Anonymous</b>	5 Days ago
No	
<b>Anonymous</b>	5 Days ago
No	
<b>Anonymous</b>	5 Days ago
No	
<b>Anonymous</b>	5 Days ago
No	
<b>Anonymous</b>	5 Days ago
No	
<b>Anonymous</b>	7 Days ago
we love being where we are.	
<b>Anonymous</b>	9 Days ago
Thank you for taking interest	
<b>Anonymous</b>	9 Days ago
Your survey seemed to ignore web-based, e-commerce opportunities	
<b>Anonymous</b>	11 Days ago
High taxes drive away the children who should stay and own businesses and become workers.	

<b>Anonymous</b> No	12 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> No	12 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> Will the homeless population in downtown Torrington affect economic growth in downtown Torrington?	12 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> taxes keep rising.	12 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> Workforce development for skilled labor is extremely important.	12 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> The largest barriers to providing services for our clients are lack of affordable housing and lack of public transportation.	12 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> z	12 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> Housing that is affordable in places where a car is not needed, especially for young people	12 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> no	12 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> n/a	12 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> no	12 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> ct is a difficult place to do business, which is why companies and people are moving out to other states	12 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> Nothing, but thank you for your work!	12 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> No	12 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> Nope!	12 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> N/A	12 Days ago

<b>Anonymous</b> Affordable housing is primary	12 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> na	12 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> No	13 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> no	13 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> No	13 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> Not at this time.	13 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> no	13 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> no	13 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> This is a beautiful part of the world to live and work in. If zoning regulations took into account that businesses need to exist in the area, and towns made sure that housing was available and affordable, we could attract very qualified, talented people to the area. As well as a balance needs to be struck between 'commercial' and 'residential', it is possible for both to peaceably exist. The powerful influence that happens via the out of state weekenders should not be what governs those who live and work here full time. ah, good luck with that :-)	13 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> Nothing comes to mind	13 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> Keep focusing on innovative ideas to draw business investment as well as tourism.	13 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> None	13 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> No	13 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> Need gov' to actually HELP businesses	13 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> no	13 Days ago

<b>Anonymous</b> no	13 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> no	13 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> No	13 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> If we could find young people who wanted to work, they would not be able to afford housing. Health dept is unsupportive.	13 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> No	13 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> .	13 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> There is not enough funding for local non profits.	14 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> We desperately need more skilled employees in all the trades. The service industry is booming in the NW Corner however finding employees is a problem that is forcing some successful businesses to either cut back their customer base and in some cases, close their doors.	14 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> No - thanks for sending this	14 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> Yes - I'm launching a WEEKLY "small business owner's Circle" in 2024. Our first meeting is at the Po Café on the historic Green in Washington, 7:30 AM Tuesday January 2nd. There is no barrier to entry, so no cost for membership. The desire is a diverse variety of feedback & community building, so the only restriction is ONE business per category. Any number of nonprofits or municipal seats can attend. The format will be rose, Bud, thorn. Please encourage others from any geographic to confirm attendance by texting 203-577-8979. Please also encourage other community organizers to establish the same in the towns they work in. Goal: To collectively solve the thorns	14 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> No	14 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> No	14 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> No	14 Days ago

<b>Anonymous</b> No	14 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> No	14 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> Paying personal property tax on business inventory and supplies is absurd.	14 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> Local govt underutilized	15 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> no	15 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> What is the NHCOC?	15 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> No.	15 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> no	15 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> N/A	17 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> Not at this time	18 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> No	18 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> e	18 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> No	18 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> N/A	19 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> It's a hard place to make a living as salaries haven't kept pace with cost of living	19 Days ago
<b>Anonymous</b> No	19 Days ago

**Anonymous**

19 Days ago

Cleaning up Waterbury and Torrington would make a huge impact on the economic and social success of the region.

**Anonymous**

19 Days ago

Providing avenues for young people to engage with their communities should be a priority for future economic and community development projects. Many of the institutions that make NWCT a nice place to live are non-profits or social/civic clubs that rely heavily on volunteers and donors to make their work possible; however, younger age cohorts are not engaging with these organizations at the same rate as older age cohorts. (This is a national trend, not just a NWCT trend - there's nothing specific our area is doing wrong and there's no easy solution.) Many young people work in retail or in health care, with schedules that are irregular and physically and psychologically punishing; in addition, the rapid increase in housing costs in this area is forcing many younger people to work additional hours or take on more than one job. High childcare costs also make it very difficult for young families to get by financially right now. These conditions make it difficult for younger people to volunteer or be active local citizens. Trying to find new ways of engaging younger people in the community both helps the organizations that rely on volunteers, and also helps to promote a sense of connectedness and community well-being for younger people. It can also provide younger people with job experience and connections that can help them to access better-paying and more regular jobs. As a business community, finding ways to help young people get involved despite economic challenges is going to be really important in the coming years.

**Anonymous**

20 Days ago

Thank you for your efforts in this endeavor to improve.

**Anonymous**

20 Days ago

Immigrants and ex-offenders do not have as many opportunities as others to get employment and housing

**Anonymous**

20 Days ago

NA

**Anonymous**

21 Days ago

no

**Anonymous**

21 Days ago

NA

**Anonymous**

25 Days ago

no

**Anonymous**

25 Days ago

There does not feel like effective way to market as many methods are saturated or overpriced.

**Anonymous**

25 Days ago

.

**Anonymous**

1 Month ago

A lack of employees for a number of positions. Annual minimum wage increases are driving inflation as we have to increase our rates. That said, government funding for programs is not increasing to keep pace.



<b>Anonymous</b>	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
We need to retain young folks in the region and keep them from leaving for more urban areas.	
<b>Anonymous</b>	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
no	
<b>Anonymous</b>	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
no	
<b>Anonymous</b>	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
no	
<b>Anonymous</b>	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
.	
<b>Anonymous</b>	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
We have hired someone to do part time recruiting only for us because our biggest hurdle is employees with the qualifications (trade licenses in CT and MA) & having enough spots for apprentices to learn the trade and be the next generation of plumbing, heating and AC techs	
<b>Anonymous</b>	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
no	
<b>Anonymous</b>	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
No.	
<b>Anonymous</b>	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
Disappointed with SCORE and NW Chamber	
<b>Anonymous</b>	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
Have a wonderful holiday!	
<b>Anonymous</b>	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
No	
<b>Anonymous</b>	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
lack of affordable housing for young professionals	
<b>Anonymous</b>	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
No	
<b>Anonymous</b>	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
It is difficult to make a profit in childcare since living expenses are so high, families cannot pay their childcare tuition fees.	
<b>Anonymous</b>	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
CT IS A VERY HIGH COST STATE TO OPERATE A BUSINESS	

<b>Anonymous</b> No	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
<b>Anonymous</b> no	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
<b>Anonymous</b> Small business in this area is suffering.	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
<b>Anonymous</b> no	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>
<b>Anonymous</b> NO	<a href="#">1 Month ago</a>

NOTE: combination of all "other" responses and not reflective of one response across rows.			
Q1: What industry/sector do you work in? - Other - Other	Q2: What are the top three advantages of doing business in the region? - Other - Other	Q3: What regional resources have you taken advantage of to help improve your business? - Other - Other	Q4: What challenges are you facing that makes it difficult for you to do business in the region? - Other - Other
Library	Grow up here, family ties	Washington Business Association	None of the above
Lawyer	Good traffic flow	None	No challenges at this time
Education	My clients are not local, I do not see any advantage to doing business locally	None of the above	Lack of commerce outside of Hartford
Education	Sense of community	None	None
Online retail (no storefront) business	Affordability of real estate	The Nature Conservancy, Land Trust Alliance, Housatonic Valley Association	Neighbors who do not welcome business development, and who resist change.
Design Services	Perfect location for a Museum with good road access and beautiful surrounding hills	Norfolk EDC	None
Beauty services/Theme	Interests in the arts	None of the above	Demographics: very few school aged children
Indicative	Lack of similar businesses in the area	Washington Business Association, New Milford Chamber of Commerce, Kent Chamber of Commerce, Uitchfield area business Association, Woodbury Chamber of Commerce.	High cost of living for entry level workers / young people - this is a incentive to pursue nonprofit work
Technology	educational collaborations	None of the above	restrictive nature of doing business in CT
Public Coordinator, Communications	It's a privilege to be able to live in and work from the same town and employ local people. It wouldn't be the same if I were forced to move my business to New Milford in Torrington!	None	Lack of available childcare options
Education	RICH historical heritage	Casey, Inc	Aging general population
Non Medical Home Care - 137	Civic and community organization minded population overall.	None of these; we are a member of the Kent Chamber of Commerce, which has no discernible benefit to our work	Part time residents do not invest themselves into the community and get involved in local non profits.
Beauty	Very few competitors	Kent Chamber of Commerce	Lack of diversity
	It isn't true that this region has all of these advantages ("strong advanced manufacturing and health care sectors"??), some are highly subjective ("quality of life"), and most of them are available in most other areas. It's a leading question that won't give you good data.	None	#1. Ranking higher than all of the above - Lack of AREA affordable housing for service providers
Energy & Home Services	Nice people	Washington Business Association	None
Education	Not a lot of competition in this region for our business	Local Government	None
We are a volunteer group promoting and constructing varied use trails in Torrington.	Our region is attractive to visitors from within and outside of the state. Our state is generally supportive of the role of arts in education.	None	The solution to all the region's problems is more and better jobs. Good jobs multiply when employers find CT a good place to do business. For businesses that can choose between CT and any other state, the strongest determinants are taxes and regulations. CT ranks very poorly on both counts. That's why there is a net outflow of people every year (with a brief inversion during COVID). And the people that leave are exactly the ones we need: Business owners, wealthy retirees, and young educated people.
Education	Not applicable	None of these	Need for concerted effort to make our region attractive to young people.
Early Childhood Education/Child Care	What art and culture scene	Northwest CT Arts Council, Discover Uitchfield Hills	Not applicable
Education	A sense that social and economic conditions are improving.	Not applicable	Opaid epidemic, lack of affordable housing, ridiculous overpriced housing market, decrepit general infrastructure, poorly run small towns, crime spreading outwards from troubled cities/owners, allowing a few more chain retailers would be helpful
Health Food Store	Access to social services	None of these	Staff members do not want to work more than 40 hours
Spa	Build an infrastructure, mainly 2nd home owners, while rebuild services network of service providers in the SE sector (CT Farm Energy Program, Farm Credit East, Berkshire Ag Ventures)	None of these	Affordable housing for employees
Education	Location on the west side near from northwest locations	None of these	finding urban force that is willing to work in agricultural production, continued increase in utility costs and property values
Education	Regional CPA firm that services the NW corner	None of these	
Health care	Not sure	None of these	
	None	None of these	
	CT Resource and Conservation District (grant application TA), USDA NRCS (Torrington)	None of these	
	None have fit my business	None of these	
	Many of the nonprofits are clients of ours	None of these	
	Northwest CT Community Foundation	None of these	



In 2015 the Community Crossroads Report was published and identified 10 trends, that collectively indicate that the region has an aging population and a reduction in available and educated workforce. We are still trying to determine the long-term impact of the Pandemic; we are uncertain if the pandemic has changed the trajectory or rate of increase/decrease of each of the specific trends. However, with confidence, we can determine is that the population continues to age and there remains limited availability of an educated workforce. In both cases, the Pandemic has exacerbated these conditions and shed a light on how critical to the local economy these trends really are.

During the pandemic, many of our retirement or near-retirement-age individuals left the workforce, opening a significant number of jobs that have still gone unfilled. In many instances, this has limited the growth of existing businesses (restaurants have reduced hours and manufacturing companies have eliminating shifts) and made it difficult to attract new businesses or private investment into the region.

Manufacturing and Healthcare, the top two industries in NW CT, have both been significantly impacted by the reduction of the workforce. Both industries, along with construction and trades, have seen a significant increase in demand; however, retirements and reduced workforce has made filling open position difficult and forced them to search for employees beyond the region, which increases the demand for compensation due to increased commutes or positions have remained unfilled.

Recognizing that the fight for human talent has become a national trend as summarized by *Dan Damerson, Northern California Community Development Director, in an article titled "Central Cities on the Rise Attracting Housing and Jobs, he states:*

*"It was not very long ago that a company could decide where they wanted to be located and employees followed... There is a new trend with a growing number of employees, millennials in particular, deciding where they want to live first and then finding jobs. Companies are following the talent".*

We understand that in order to attract the workforce necessary to support existing businesses, we must first improve the factors that promote a high-quality of life that is attractive to the younger generations and attract the next generation of workforce into our region and, at the same time, continue to support our current population.

A Creative Economy [1] has gained momentum and is now a growing industry in the region. There has been an increase in artisan markets and many small business start-ups, both home-based business and brick & mortar that occupy downtown store fronts. Additionally, collaborative artist studios and workspaces have also found a place in this region. The Creative Economy continues to create jobs, improve the quality of life of our communities and contribute to the economic growth occurring in the region.

Some of this growth can be attributed to the pandemic. Individuals who were laid off or let go during the pandemic, had an opportunity to shift focus to their "hobby", strengthening the cottage industries of crafters, artists and creative thinkers who shifted to working from home and selling their wares and services on-line and in local retail stores. Instead of going back to work, or taking on a second job, many individuals have chosen to pursue their craft as a career, or second income. This is considered a positive impact on the region; however, it is worth noting that this movement adds additional stressors

and increases demand of the workforce. Specifically, there is now increasing competition for part-time and entry to mid-level positions in manufacturing, healthcare, trade and hospitality industries, which did not previously exist, supporting the need to attract and retain more talent.

In addition to attracting Creatives, Northwest CT was an attractive place for people to move to during the pandemic, due to its rural characteristics and proximity to both New York City and Boston. Yet, this has done little to lower the median age of the region and attract individuals that would ultimately fill the jobs within the region. In fact, this demand on housing limited the available housing stock, nearly depleting affordable and middle-income housing options for both ownership and rental, and significantly drove up the cost of housing adding barriers for the entry-level and mid-level employee to live in this area, making it difficult to attract workforce.

These set of factors pose a conundrum, of sorts, in order to support business growth, we must first attract the workforce; however, we do not have the housing stock necessary to support the increased workforce. Addressing the housing needs will require significant investment and many years. In the meantime, we need to ensure that good-paying jobs remain available that will support the workforce once the housing is built.

To increase economic opportunities and support economic growth we must focus on initiatives that support existing businesses while simultaneously working to address the housing needs in the region and attract the next generation of workers. Both short-term and long-term goals are to create vibrant communities that will attract a qualified workforce, support local businesses and ultimately bring in more discretionary spending to the region.

*[1]The creative economy has no single definition. It is an evolving concept which builds on the interplay between human creativity and ideas and intellectual property, knowledge and technology. Essentially it is the knowledge-based economic activities upon which the 'creative industries' are based.*

*The creative industries – which include advertising, architecture, arts and crafts, design, fashion, film, video, photography, music, performing arts, publishing, research & development, software, computer games, electronic publishing, and TV/radio – are the lifeblood of the creative economy. They are also considered an important source of commercial and cultural value.*

*The creative economy is the sum of all the parts of the creative industries, including trade, labour and production. Today, creative industries are among the most dynamic sectors in the world economy providing new opportunities for developing countries to leapfrog into emerging high-growth areas of the world economy. – United Nations Conferences on Trade and Development*

## Address the Region's Housing Needs

Task	Strategic Partner(s)	EDD Task	Description
Identify and seek funding sources for regionally significant housing development Projects	State of CT DOH; CT Housing Finance Authority (CHFA); Litchfield County Center for Housing Opportunity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify funding programs that each Town would be eligible for</li> <li>Assist in development of project or program to make competitive for state and federal grant funds</li> <li>Advocate to ensure rural towns are eligible and competitive for State Programs and funding sources</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LIHTC</li> <li>CDBG – Small Cities</li> </ul>
Reduce lead and other hazardous materials from existing housing stock	Torrington Area Health District	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify &amp; seek funding sources to expand Safe Homes Program</li> <li>Identify additional stakeholders that can offer funding opportunities without threat of enforcement and develop relationship program (i.e. banks, hospitals etc...)</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safe Homes pilot program (Torrington &amp; TAHD)</li> <li>Healthy Homes Program (CT Children's Hospital)</li> </ul>
Implement Municipal Affordable Housing Plans	Municipalities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support Municipal initiatives.</li> <li>Identify and initiate regional cost-sharing partnerships that can improve feasibility of projects</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>21 Affordable Housing Plans</li> </ul>
Adaptive Reuse of brownfield and underutilized properties	State of CT; DECD; Municipalities; Private Developers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist with Grant writing and administration</li> <li>Assist with project development to make projects competitive for state and federal funds</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CT Municipal Brownfields Grants</li> <li>Community Challenge Grants</li> <li>CIF 2030 Grants</li> </ul>
Neighborhood Revitalization	Municipalities, State of CT, Banks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote CDBG Small Cities Program</li> <li>Advocate for initiatives with legislators and state officials</li> <li>Identify and develop specific projects/ funding opportunities</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Healthy Neighborhoods, Healthy Families (Nationwide Children's Hospital)</li> <li>Social Determinants of Health</li> </ul>

## Improve Quality of Life

Task	Strategic Partner(s)	EDD Task	Description
Reduce impact of future tax base caused by the dissolution of MIRA by developing a regional solution to MSW	Municipalities; State of CT; Legislation	1. Create Sub-Committee to develop a regional solution	
Improve Public Transportation to be a reliable choice for transportation	NW Transit District; CT DOT; employers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify potential for shared services, i.e. dispatch, drivers, maintenance etc....</li> <li>2. Identify all organizations operation transportation services and what services are available</li> <li>3. Identify demand for new services</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipalities which will be the core of the transportation system: Torrington, Winsted, Litchfield &amp; Burlington</li> <li>• Non-emergency medical rides</li> </ul>
Promote Outdoor Recreational assets and improve access, Walkability and bicycle safety	Municipalities, NW CT Arts Council, Local Trail Groups, CT DEEP/State Parks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create Walkable/ Bikeable Communities</li> <li>2. Improve access to outdoor recreational areas</li> <li>3. Support and promote community events through Discover Litchfield Hills</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision Zero</li> <li>• Regional Transportation Plan (Alternate Transportation)</li> </ul>



## Attract visitors to the region/ Create Vibrant Communities

Task	Strategic Partner(s)	EDD Task	Description / Details
Attract visitors to the region (Tourism)	Municipalities, Historic & Cultural Districts, arts/cultural organizations, event planners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop &amp; implement a marketing strategy</li> <li>2. Host website</li> <li>3. Create marketing material</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discover Litchfield Hills</li> </ul>
Reduce impacts of natural resources, due to increased use	CT DEEP; CT Forest & Park Assoc. (CFPA)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create educational material</li> <li>2. Promote and distribute educational material</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Etiquette on hiking, littering and use of outdoor spaces.</li> <li>• Clearly delineate between public and private properties</li> <li>• Rules and use for specific parks/properties</li> <li>• Identify proper parking areas</li> </ul>
Increase exposure on state-wide tourism initiatives	State of CT DECD; Western Tourism Board; municipalities; non-profit organizations; event planners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop material to be posted on State social media and websites</li> <li>2. Educate stakeholders on state and regional initiatives and how they can leverage resources</li> <li>3. Promote Arts &amp; Cultural Assets</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CT Visits</li> <li>• Visit Western CT</li> </ul>

## Support business growth, encourage investment and attract new businesses

Task	Strategic Partner(s)	EDD Task	Description / Details
Align partnership goals and tie together programs to leverage initiatives	RSP, WIB, State of CT, Chamber of Commerce	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create platform to host all information (1-stop resource)</li> <li>2. Host informational and networking events to share information</li> </ol>	
Cost-sharing initiatives for small businesses	Local business owners; non-profit organizations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work out the legal and operational logistics of this partnership</li> <li>2. Identify existing resources for local businesses</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-Op for small businesses to offer more competitive benefit packages to employees</li> <li>• Consortium or purchasing alliance to increase purchase power</li> <li>• Shared services to attract talent and reduce expense</li> <li>• Food Hub</li> </ul>
Improve access and affordability to child care		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create data base of all child-care businesses in the region</li> </ol>	
BRE Program		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and implement BRE business visitation program</li> <li>2. Host software/platform to analyze data collected</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide data to businesses to help inform decisions</li> <li>• Façade Grants</li> <li>• Economic Gardening**</li> </ul>
Adequate infrastructure to support business growth	Municipalities; Eversource; Water/Sewer operators; state of CT; Northwest Connect	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify expansion opportunity and cost/benefit analysis of expansion</li> <li>2. Identify area for trans-loading station along the Naugatuck Rail Line</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fiber-Optics</li> <li>• Utilities (Water/electric/gas/sewer)</li> <li>• Cellular Service</li> <li>• Freight</li> </ul>

**Develop training opportunities that “home grow” the workforce that is needed in the region**

Task	Strategic Partner(s)	EDD Task	Description / Details
<p>Training Programs for High School and post-High School students to prepare for workforce</p>	<p>Ed Advance; Oliver Wolcott Technical School; Vo Ag Programs NW CT Chamber of Commerce; NCCC;</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support and advocate for local initiatives and programs</li> <li>2. Collaboration with institutions of higher education and industry leaders</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ed Advance: Accelerated Career &amp; College Program</li> <li>• Vo-Ag programs as feeder programs to support local agricultural and landscaping companies</li> </ul>
<p>Access to Artificial Intelligence (AI)</p>	<p>Local businesses</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify AI opportunities that can be applied throughout the region</li> <li>2. Develop industry clusters that can benefit from shared AI</li> <li>3. Ensure infrastructure (Fiber Optics) are in place to support technology</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Up-skill” workforce</li> <li>• Training to program and operate AI</li> <li>• Automated Farming Equipment</li> </ul>



## APPENDIX: List of Priority Regional Infrastructure Projects

Project	Location	Project Description & Status	Project Cost	Potential Funding Sources
<b>Transportation</b>				
Keep State maintained roads <u>and sidewalks</u> in a state of good repair	ConnDOT District 4	Currently the State invests approximately \$13 million per year in maintaining State roads in ConnDOT District 4. It is estimated that \$26 million per year is needed in District 4 in order to be able to maintain every road mile every 15 years rather than every 30 years.	\$26 million/yr	Connecticut Dept. of Transportation (ConnDOT)
Keep locally maintained roads <u>and sidewalks</u> in a state of good repair	all 21 towns in NHCOC region	It is estimated that \$20 million is needed per year to maintain local roads. Town road aid received by the towns from the State covers only a small percentage of these costs.	\$20 million/yr	Town road aid from State, Municipalities
<del>Northwestern Connecticut Transit District (NWCTD) facility</del>	<del>facility in downtown Torrington, NWCTD serves 17 towns</del>	<del>Creation of centralized bus storage, maintenance and dispatch center for the NWCT Transit District</del>	<del>\$17 million</del>	<del>ConnDOT</del>
<b>Naugatuck Railroad</b>	Torrington, Waterbury, Thomaston & Naugatuck	Expansion of freight and sightseeing passenger rail services from and upgrades to track. Phase I upgrades currently underway cost \$1.6-1.7M. Phase II (2 to 4 years) will require \$2.5M for tie replacement and rail renewal and \$1.5 for bridge rehab.	\$4 million	ConnDOT
<b>Housatonic Railroad</b>	Cornwall, Sharon, Salisbury, Lakeville, Falls Village, Canaan, Kent, New Milford & Danbury	Much of the track itself, which is owned by the State, is between 90- 140 years old and must be replaced to avoid costly derailments and interruption of freight service.	\$50 million	ConnDOT TIGER (U.S. DOT)
<b>Housatonic Bike/Walk Trail (HouBike)</b>	Salisbury, Canaan, Falls Village, Cornwall, Sharon & Kent	Phase I: \$140K for design and study of 10 miles Phase II Trail construction at \$400-500,000/mile=\$5M	\$5.14 million	Phase I: CT OPM Responsible Growth Grant

## APPENDIX: List of Priority Regional Infrastructure Projects

<b>Naugatuck River Greenway</b>	Torrington, Harwinton and Litchfield	Route planning for the Torrington to Naugatuck section of the trail. Design of final route & Construction of segment between Torrington & Litchfield/Harwinton.	\$110,000 Section 1 \$3.5M Section 2 \$7.8M Section 3 \$28,000	CT OPM Responsible Growth Grant
<b>Sue Grossman Still River Greenway</b>	Winsted, Torrington	Extend the trail the final mile 2 miles into downtown Winsted. And 5- miles into Downtown Torrington. Design on both complete, construction only	\$1-8 million Winsted \$? Torrington \$5M	CT OPM
<b>5-way intersection</b>	Torrington	Priority intersection with safety issues needs fully engineered design plans from ConnDOT		ConnDOT
<b>NWCT Food Hub</b>		Build a regional food hub facility for aggregation, distribution, and marketing of locally grown food	\$247,500	USDA
<b>Roadway improvements to reach vision zero initiative by implementing complete streets initiatives</b>	All Towns			
<b>Improve Gateways into region</b>	Route 8, Route 44, Route 7, Route 63 Route 202	Gateways are first impressions of the region, ensuring there is proper signage and inviting welcome mat of all highway exits and along major routes to direct people to business districts, downtowns, historic districts and cultural districts		
<b>Water &amp; Sewer</b>				
<b>Torrington Water Pollution Control Facility Upgrade</b>	Torrington Litchfield Harwinton	Upgrades to meet DEEP requirements and replace equipment. Funding has been budgeted for this project.	\$51.3 million	Torrington, Litchfield, Harwinton

**APPENDIX: List of Priority Regional Infrastructure Projects**

<p><u>Torrington Sewer Line Extension</u></p>	<p><u>Torrington</u></p>	<p><u>Extension of Sewer Line &amp; Pump Station down S. Main Street to expand development opportunities</u></p>	<p><u>\$2M</u></p>	<p><u>Torrington</u></p>
<p><b>Energy</b></p>				
<p><b>Natural Gas</b></p>	<p>Burlington</p>	<p>CT Natural Gas has run a pipeline into Burlington from Farmington. A new housing development, an elementary school and the new fire station are currently on this pipeline. CT Natural Gas has extended this line through Burlington's central business district and to the high school which is near the Harwinton/Burlington town line. This proposed extension would cover a total of six miles.</p>		
<p><b>Communications</b></p>				
<p><b>Broadband Internet and enhanced cell phone reception</b></p>	<p>All Towns</p>	<p>Work is underway on a technology and business model study to determine the most feasible way to connect homes and businesses in the region to fiber optic broadband. This study is being funded by the State Regional Performance Incentive Program.</p>	<p>\$350 million</p>	<p>Private Investment, USDA Rural Development, Municipalities</p>
<p><u>Improve Cellular Service</u></p>	<p><u>Warren, Kent, Washington</u></p>	<p><u>Cell Tower installation is necessary</u></p>		<p><u>Private, Siting Council</u></p>
<p><u>Marketing website and social media platform</u></p>	<p>All Towns</p>	<p><u>Maintain and develop existing platform. Annual subscription and updated data to ensure business listings are accurate and content development</u></p>	<p><u>\$25,000/yr</u></p>	<p><u>NHCOG</u></p>









# ATTACHMENT C



## MINUTES OF THE NHCOC MEETING December 14, 2023 In-person

### Member/Representative Attendance:

(R = Remote attendance)

R	Barkhamsted, Don Stein	✓	Harwinton, Michael Criss	✓	Roxbury, Patrick Roy
✓	Burlington, Doug Thompson	✓	Kent, Marty Lindenmayer	✓	Salisbury, Curtis Rand
	Canaan, David Barger	R	Litchfield, Denise Raap	✓	Sharon, Casey Flanagan
✓	Colebrook, Bradley Bremer	✓	Morris, Tom Weik	R	Torrington, Elinor Carbone
✓	Cornwall, Gordon Ridgway	✓	New Hartford, Dan Jerram	✓	Warren, Greg LaCava
✓	Goshen, Todd Carusillo	✓	Norfolk, Matt Riiska	✓	Washington, Jim Brinton
	Hartland, Magi Winslow	R	North Canaan, Brian Ohler	✓	Winchester, Bob Geiger

### Others in Attendance:

**NHCOC Staff:** Sarah Better, Kathryn Faraci, Leo Ghio, Rista Malanca, Rob Phillips, Jean Speck.

**Guests:** Tim Waldron & Daniel Davis - Eversource, Kevin Tedesco CONNDOT, Mark Daley & Burt Hunter - MIRA, member of the press.

**Call to Order:** Vice Chairman Mike Criss called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM.

**Public Comment:** none

**Welcome new board members:** VC Mike Criss welcomed new board members, and shared two important upcoming training opportunities for new officials presented by DEMHS (information and registration can be found on the [DEMHS training website](#))

- Basic WebEOC training – January 13<sup>th</sup>
- Incident Command for Elected Officials

### **Nominations: close nominations**

Dan Jerram reported on behalf of the nominating committee recommended the following members to the executive committee: Mike Criss, Dan Jerram, Tom Weik, Elinor Carbone, Patrick Roy, Gordon Ridgeway. There were no nominations from the floor.

**MOTION by Greg Lacava/Denise Raap – to close nominations.** Motion carried unanimously.

**MOTION – By Jim Brinton/Curtis Rand to accept recommended slate from nominating committee –** motion carried unanimously.

*New chair Dan Jerram assumed chair of the meeting @ 1006.*

### **Report of Executive Director:**

- *Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day recap* – ED Phillips reported ~530 vehicles came through, reported on improvement of previous wait times for participants. Next event is in June in Falls Village.
- *Appointment of the 2024 Legislative Committee* – planning legislative breakfast with state legislators. 2024 is a short session from February 7th to May 8th. **MOTION: Tom Weik/Greg**

**LaCava – to appoint the 2024 Legislative Committee with members Mike Criss, Brian Ohler, Patrick Roy, Todd Carusillo, Elinor Carbone, Denise Raap – Motion carried unanimously.**

- Breakfast with Chamber and Area - TBD
- ED Activity Log – October to December – distributed to members.

**NHCOG Staff Introductions, Areas of Primary Responsibility and Updates:** COG staff presented a slide deck (attached) to introduce and update members on roles, goals and initiatives of the areas of focus.

- **ACTION – Approval of Recommended Members to the Northwest CT Economic Development Collaborative (NWCT EDC) Special Committee, Including NHCOG Representative Members (4) (Attachment A)**  
**MOTION by Dave/Matt Riiska to adopt the proposed membership of the NWCT EDC Special Committee as submitted – motion carried unanimously.**
- **ACTION – Appointment of the Recommended Slate of NWCT EDC Members to the NWCT EDC Executive Committee (Attachment A)**  
**MOTION by Matt Riiska/Doug Thompson to appoint the recommended slate to the NWCT EDC Executive Committee as submitted – motion carried unanimously.**
- **ACTION - STIP Amendment Approval – Intersection Improvements and Sidewalk Installation at Routes CT109 and CT61 in Morris (Attachment B)**  
**MOTION by Patrick Roy/Todd Carusillo to approve the STIP amendment as submitted.** Motion carried unanimously.

**Status and Objectives of the MIRA Dissolution Authority and the Future Disposition of Transfer**

**Stations:** Mark Daley, President and CEO of MIRA, and Burt Hunter, Chair of the MIRA Dissolution Authority board of directors, provided an update on the MIRA Dissolution Authority work. See attached slide deck. [[REFERENCE PA 23-170](#)]. Discussion among the members to create a subcommittee to address the topic, ownership of the Torrington transfer station.

Currently there are 12 towns still in MIRA: Canaan, Cornwall, Goshen, New Hartford, North Canaan, Salisbury, Sharon, Torrington, Harwinton, Winchester.

Chair Jerram posed the question to Mr. Daley regarding the possibility/eligibility of NHCOG to take over ownership of the Torrington transfer station and becoming a regional resource recovery authority. He remarked that yes, NHCOG would meet the DEEP goals of creating more regional authorities rather than a town-by-town approach.

[REFERENCE: the [MIRA Dissolution Authority](#) meets monthly and anyone can attend.]

**MOTION by Todd Carusillo /Curtis Rand to create a special committee on MSW and appoint members Dan Jerram, Denise Raap, Todd Carisullo, Matt Riiska.** Motion carried unanimously.

**DEMHS Update:** Henry Pazscuk introduced himself and briefly gave information on DEMHS. Highlighted the importance for all newly elected officials to attend the upcoming WebEOC basic training on January 13<sup>th</sup>. Also mentioned the 2024 CCM Emergency Management Conference will be held at Camp Niantic. Deadline for submitting updated LEOPs is January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 in order to be eligible for EMPG funding.

**Administrative Items:**

- ACTION - Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes for the October 12, 2023 Regular Meeting (Attachment C)
  - **MOTION –By Mike Criss/ Todd Carusillo to approve the October 12<sup>th</sup> minutes as submitted.** Motion carried unanimously with David Barger abstaining.
- b) ACTION - Approval of Financial Statements for September and October (Attachment D)
  - **MOTION – By Mike Criss/Patrick Roy to approve the financial statements for September and October as submitted.** Motion carried unanimously.
- c) ACTION – Approval of 2024 and January 2025 NHCOG Meeting Schedule (Attachment E)

- **MOTION – By Mike Criss/Patrick Roy to approve the 2024 and January 2025 NHCOG Meeting Schedule as amended to hold Jan, Feb, March meetings remotely and to offer hybrid meetings or in-person in the region on an as needed basis.** Motion carried unanimously.
- d) ACTION - Resolution to support EMPG Regional Hazardous Materials Teams Grant for 2023-2024 Period in the Amount of \$75,000 (Attachment F)
  - **MOTION – By Patrick Roy/Todd Carusillo to resolution to support EMPG Regional Hazardous Materials Teams Grant for 2023-2024 Period in the Amount of \$76,500.** Motion carried unanimously.

**Other Business from the Membership for Regional or Member Benefit and/or Meeting adjournment.**  
**MOTION by Patrick Roy/Todd Carusillo to adjourn the meeting.** Motion carried unanimously.

**Meeting adjourned** at 12:11pm

Respectfully submitted,

*NHCOG staff*

Northwest Hills Council of  
Governments



**WELCOME!**

**NHCOC**

**Chief Executive Officers**

# YOUR NHCOCG TEAM

*Robert Phillips* | Executive Director

*Rista Malanca* | Director of Community & Economic Dev

*Kathryn Faraci* | Director of Transportation

*Sarah Better* | Program Manager (DEMHS Primary)

*Leonardo Ghio* | Rural Health Network Project Director

*Jean Speck* | Senior Regional Planner

# Education & Professional Experience

- BS, Natural Resources Mngt - UConn
- MS, Water Resources - UConn
- MPA, Emphasis in Org Mngt - UConn



- AICP Certified Planning Professional



- ~20 Years in Lead Roles for Municipal Land Use and Community Planning, EcDev, Conservation and Farmland Preservation

- Previously Southington Director of Planning and Community Development. Also, Town Planner in Farmington, Ellington and Windsor Locks.

- Professional Membership in APA and CCAPA



**American Planning Association**

**RESPONSIBLE FOR:**

**ALL THINGS NHCOCG**



[rphillips@northwesthillscog.org](mailto:rphillips@northwesthillscog.org)

Office Phone: 860-491-9884

EXT 101



# Community and Economic Development

Rista Malanca, AICP

Director of Community and Economic Development

[rmalanca@northwesthillscog.org](mailto:rmalanca@northwesthillscog.org)

Office Phone: 860-491-9884 x 102

# Education & Professional Expertise

- B.S. Degree, UConn - Corporate & Small Business Operations
- A.S. Degree, NCCC - Business Management
- AICP Certification
- 17 years of Municipal experience in NW CT
- Previously CZEO, Wetlands Agent & Flood Plain (Note: Have not maintained certifications, but continue to stay informed of all aspects of Land Use)

## Specialize in:

- Project development and management
- Grant writing and administration
- Brownfield redevelopment
- Land use & regulations implementation
- Trail and Greenway development
- Adaptive reuse projects
- Communication & relationship building



**Life-long  
(4<sup>th</sup> generation)  
resident of  
Winsted.**



**My family and I  
live here, work  
here and play  
here!**



# 5-Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

- ▶ Current EDA Award -Partnership Planning Grant \$60,000 per year for 3 years (2022, 2023 & 2024)
- ▶ Other EDA grants for implementation available
- ▶ Framework for regional Economic Development priorities over the next 5-years. Guides how our time and funding be spent.
- ▶ Current CEDS is expired. Need to have new plan in place by May 1, in order to get invited to “Apply” for year 3 funding.
- ▶ Goal: NHCOC adoption of CEDS at March Board Meeting.
- ▶ Plan requires input from a broad-based committee that representative of the regions industries and stakeholders. Who from your community would you like to invite to the Committee?
- ▶ Create “List of Priority Regional infrastructure Projects” to be included in CEDS

# DRAFT - Potential Goals

## **Attracting and retaining younger generations and families to the region**

- Reshape the regional housing market
- Create Walkable and Bike Friendly Communities
- Promote and improve access to outdoor recreational areas

## **Focus on supporting existing businesses**

- Workforce Development & Attraction
- Infrastructure Improvements to support growth
- Robust Business retention and expansion efforts

## **Be positioned to attract new businesses, with a focus on entrepreneurs and small businesses**

- Redevelopment of Brownfields and underutilized properties
- Leverage State & Federal resources, such as the Municipal Redevelopment Authority, Enterprise Zones and City and Town Development Act
- Marketing Strategy
- Identify and support expansion of existing infrastructure to accommodate new development

## **Position NW CT as a tourism destination and promote Arts & Culture**

- Support the Creative Economies
- Re-brand Discover Litchfield Hills and develop a marketing strategy that will promote the region as a destination
- Promote Historic and Cultural Districts

**Other goals or initiatives?**

# Transportation Programs

**Kathryn Faraci**  
Transportation Planning Director

[kfaraci@northwesthillscog.org](mailto:kfaraci@northwesthillscog.org)

Office Phone: 860-491-9884 x 103

# Educational & Professional Expertise

- ▶ B.S. Degree, **Babson College** - Marketing and Economic Analysis
- ▶ 35 years with **CT Department of Transportation**
- ▶ Former Deputy Director of **CT Highway Safety Office**
- ▶ Former Supervisor of **CTDOT Intergovernmental Affairs Unit**
- ▶ Currently **DEMHS ESF#14 Chairman**

## Areas of Focus:

- ❖ Unified Planning Work Program
- ❖ FTA Section 5310 Non-Traditional Program (aka RITS)
- ❖ Municipal Grant Program
- ❖ LOTCIP
- ❖ TRIPS
- ❖ Community Connectivity
- ❖ Transportation Regional Plan
- ❖ Transportation Safety Plan
- ❖ Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan



Governors Highway Safety Association  
The States' Voice on Highway Safety



# Transportation Programs

- ▶ **Unified Planning Work Program** - Outlines work tasks necessary to conduct priority trans. planning activities for NHCOCG region. [https://northwesthillscog.org/nhcog-upwp-2024\\_2025/](https://northwesthillscog.org/nhcog-upwp-2024_2025/)
- ▶ **Rural Independent Transportation Program (RITS)** - Administrative oversight of GEER, Northwestern CT Transit District and Sullivan Center transit services. <https://northwesthillscog.org/rural-independent-transportation-system-rits/>
- ▶ **State Matching Grant Program for Demand Responsive Trans.** - Annual program for elderly and disabled transportation. Max. Subsidy \$136,366/year  
Geer - Canaan (Falls Village), Cornwall, North Canaan, Sharon, and Salisbury.



# Transportation Programs cont.

- ▶ **Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP)** - Provides State funds to urbanized municipalities in lieu of Federal funds. NHCOC receives approx. \$1 million/year (Burlington, Litchfield, Winchester, Torrington, and Harwinton)
- ▶ **Transportation Rural Improvement Program (TRIPS)** - last solicitation NHCOC submitted 13 projects - total over \$20 million.
- ▶ **Community Connectivity** - Program was dev. for infrastructure improvements identified through RSA's or other planning initiatives.
- ▶ **Statewide Transportation Improvement Program** - Four-year planning document and reflects first 3 years of State CTDOT Capital Plan.

# Current Obligated STIP Projects

REGION	PROJECT	PHASE	PROGRAM	ROUTE	TOWN	DESCRIPTION
Northwest Hills						
3	0150-0137	PE	BRFP	US 202	WASHINGTON	NHS - REHAB BR 00906 O/ SHEPAUG RIVER (PD)
3	0029-0104	CON	BRZ	VARIOUS	COLEBROOK	REPLACE BR 05141 & PRESERVE BR 05146
3	0150-0136	CON	BRZ	TUNNEL ROAD	WASHINGTON	REPLACE BR 05158 O/ SHEPAUG RIVER
3	0150-0136	CON	BRZ	TUNNEL ROAD	WASHINGTON	REPLACE BR 05158 O/ SHEPAUG RIVER
3	0162-0157	CON	BRZ	CASE AVENUE	WINCHESTER	REHAB BR 05127 O/ MAD RIVER
3	0149-0088	CON	STPA	CT 45	WARREN	REPAIR EMBANK. ON LAKE WARAMAUG BRK
3	0028-0210	PE	STPA	PROSPECT HILL RD	COLCHESTER	REPLACE BR 00395 O/ ROUTE 2 (PD)
3	0097-0095	CON	STPR	US 44	NORFOLK	REPLACEMENT OF RETAINING WALLS ON US 44
3	0054-0087	PE	STPR	CT 4/CT 63	GOSHEN	UPGRADE ROTARY AND PED. IMPROVEMENTS (PD)
3	0065-0116	PE	STPR	CT 4	HARWINTON	REPLACE NON-NBI BR 01947 O/ BROOK (PD)
3	0073-0194	PE	STPR	US 202	LITCHFIELD	REPLACE BR 02231 O/ STILL BROOK (FD)
3	0073-0194	ROW	STPR	US 202	LITCHFIELD	REPLACE BR 02231 O/ STILL BROOK
3	0067-0123	PE	TAPR	VARIOUS	KENT	PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS (FD)

# Transportation Plans

## ➤ Regional Transportation Plan

- ❖ Outlines strategies and proposed projects addressing transportation issues and needs.
- ❖ Identifies priority projects and planning objectives
- ❖ Conducted every 5 years for a 30-year timeline
- ❖ Provides support for future funding

## ➤ Regional Safety Plan

- ❖ Originated from 2017 CT Strategic Highway Safety Plan to mitigate injuries and fatalities in CT.
- ❖ Identify high crash locations and effective countermeasures and strategies to reduce motor vehicle and bike/ped crashes
- ❖ Plan prioritizes regional projects for better position to receive available safety funding

# Rural Health Network Development

Leonardo Ghio, MBA  
Project Director

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Office Phone: 860-491-9884 x 105

# Educational & Professional Expertise

- ▶ MBA Healthcare Leadership, Post University
- ▶ B.A. Psychology, Southern CT State University
- ▶ Co-Chair of the Northwest Coordinated Access Network
- ▶ Steering Committee Member of the CT Age Well Collaborative
- ▶ Co-Founder and former CEO of a mobile primary care practice
- ▶ Founder of New Milford Chore Services
- ▶ Vice President of the Wheels Program of Greater New Milford
- ▶ 7 Years of experience at the municipal level and 2 years at the regional level

## Areas of Focus:

- ▶ Adolescent Mental Health Network
- ▶ Regional Opioid Response Fund
- ▶ Regional Health & Human Services Newsletter and [Resource Map](#)
- ▶ Homeless Response System
- ▶ Produce Rx Program



Connecticut  
**Age Well**  
Collaborative



# Northwest Hills Community Health Network of CT

- ▶ NHCOG is the FIRST organization in CT to receive Rural Health Network Development funding from the Health Services & Resources Administration
- ▶ \$300,000 per year, for four years
- ▶ Focusing on increasing access to mental health services for adolescents ages 13 through 18

- ▶ Project Goals:

- ▶ Employ screening for early identification and intervention of behavioral health concerns
- ▶ Increase access to adolescent mental health services
- ▶ Provide robust Care Coordination and follow-up
- ▶ Develop provider workforce pipeline partnerships
- ▶ Add new providers to the network



## ▶ Funded Partners:



GREENWOODS  
COUNSELING & REFERRALS, INC.



McCall Behavioral  
Health  
NETWORK



Community  
Health & Wellness

Our Family – Taking Care of Yours

## ▶ Partners In-Kind:



UConn

Hartford  
HealthCare

Charlotte Hungerford  
Hospital



# Regional Opioid Response Fund



## ▶ Participating Towns:

- ▶ Barkhamsted
- ▶ Canaan
- ▶ Colebrook
- ▶ Hartland
- ▶ Kent
- ▶ Litchfield
- ▶ Morris
- ▶ Norfolk
- ▶ North Canaan
- ▶ Warren
- ▶ Washington

## ▶ Mission:

To collectively achieve a greater impact to abate the adverse effects of the ongoing opioid epidemic by working closely with participating municipalities to *facilitate an intentional, sustainable, and equitable regional approach to financing and implementing evidence-based prevention, intervention and treatment strategies*, including harm-reduction programs.

## ➤ Current Projects:

- Leave Behind Kits and training for EMS
- Harm Reduction supplies for LCOTF

# Program Management /DEMHS

Sarah Better  
Program Manager

[Sbetter@northwesthillscog.org](mailto:Sbetter@northwesthillscog.org)

Office Phone: 860-491-9884 x 104



# Education and Professional Expertise

- ▶ Financial Services Diploma, Center for Financial Training
- ▶ Consumer Lending Diploma, Center for Financial Training
- ▶ Advanced Financial Services Diploma, Center for Financial Training
- ▶ Former Branch Manager, Litchfield Bancorp, Washington Depot Office
- ▶ Former Director, Warren Church Community Childcare

## Areas of Focus:

- ❖ Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS)
- ❖ Housatonic River Commission/National Parks Service Grant
- ❖ Public Works Equipment Collaborative
- ❖ Neighbor to Neighbor Program
- ❖ Governmental Portals to request funds for grant funding

# DEMHS Region 5 Fiduciary



- ▶ Monitor Program Expenditures
- ▶ Financial reports
- ▶ Weekly check in meetings with Paul Gibb, NHCOCG Region 5 Special Projects Coordinator, and John Field, DEMHS Region 5 Coordinator
- ▶ Updating policies and procedures with Paul Gibb
- ▶ For more information, please refer to our website <https://r5rept.org>

# Housatonic River Commission/National Park Service

- ▶ All bookkeeping and financial reporting for both HRC and NPS Grant
- ▶ Wild and Scenic Rivers Program -*"The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System is a collection of exceptional rivers that have been designated to protect their free-flowing condition, water quality, and outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values for the enjoyment of present and future generations."*
- ▶ Quarterly financial reporting to NPS grant

# Public Works Equipment Collaborative

- ▶ Billing and invoicing
- ▶ Bookkeeping
- ▶ Creating new rental form
- ▶ Generating information for equipment and training grants



# Regional Planning & Program Support

Jean C. Speck  
Senior Regional Planner

[jspeck@northwesthillscog.org](mailto:jspeck@northwesthillscog.org)

Office Phone: 860-491-9884 x 106

# Education & Professional Expertise

- ▶ B.A. Fine Art, Southern CT State University
- ▶ Former First Selectman, Town of Kent (2019-2023)
- ▶ 10 years State Department of Public Health, Office of Emergency Medical Services
- ▶ Connecticut Certified Municipal Certified CT Municipal Officer (CCMO) through CCM
- ▶ Co-Chair, Comptroller Scanlon's Healthcare Cabinet Committee on Rural Healthcare

## Areas of Focus:

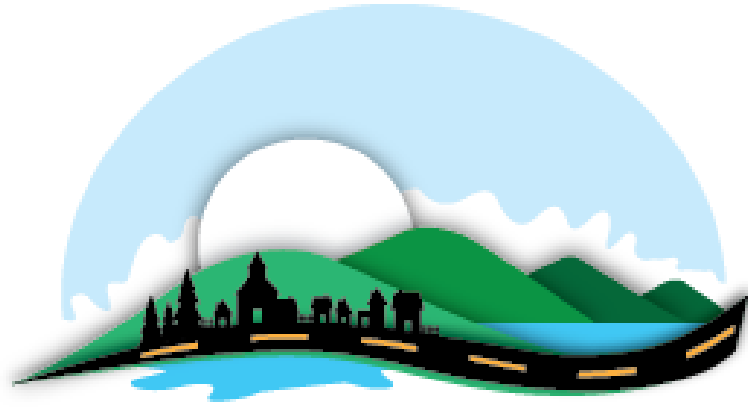
- ▶ Project development and management / Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- ▶ Grant writing and management/ Sustainability
- ▶ Data & Cybersecurity
- ▶ Emergency Medical Services
- ▶ Communication & Networking



# Planning Initiatives

- ▶ Salary Survey
- ▶ Climate Pollution Reduction Grant
- ▶ Public Works Equipment Collaborative
- ▶ Developing GIS capabilities
- ▶ New NHCOCG website
- ▶ Develop Regional Value Report Card
- ▶ Cybersecurity - assistance to towns

# THANK YOU



**NHCOG**

— Northwest Hills —  
Council of Governments



**ATTACHMENT D**

<b>NHCOG</b>				
<b>FINANCIAL REPORT</b>				
<b>NOVEMBER 2023 YEAR TO DATE - ACCRUAL BASIS</b>				
	Month November	YTD	NHCOG BUDGET FY 2023-2024	% Budget used
<b>OPERATING INCOME</b>				
Regional Service Grant		488,098	\$ 488,098	100%
ConnDOT SPR and Federal Transit		29,639	\$ 322,128	9%
RITS			\$ 10,000	0%
LOTICIP			\$ 7,500	0%
DEMHS	7,326	33,457	\$ 56,000	60%
HRSA Grant	-	56,715	\$ 145,758	39%
HRC Grant		3,500	\$ 1,470	238%
EDA Partnership			\$ 10,000	0%
Housatonic River Wild and Scenic NPS Fiduciary			\$ 13,500	0%
Found for Com Health-Rx Assist			\$ 3,000	0%
Bershire Taconic N2N			\$ 1,500	0%
Building Healthier Communities Produce Rx Pro		1,756	\$ 1,756	100%
Local Dues		54,026	\$ 54,026	100%
Pass through Revenue	-	102,669	\$ 928,350	11%
National Opioid	-	22,899	\$ -	
	<b>\$ 7,326</b>	<b>\$ 792,759</b>	<b>\$ 2,043,086</b>	
<b>STAFFING</b>				
Salaries - Direct	37,522	202,976	\$ 671,596	30%
Employee Benefits (Fringe & PTO) and Payroll Expenses	9,081	62,092	\$ 329,357	19%
<b>Staffing Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 46,603</b>	<b>\$ 265,068</b>	<b>\$ 1,000,953</b>	<b>26%</b>
<b>OVERHEAD COSTS</b>				
Audit (Fiscal Services)	1,680	7,150	\$ 19,000	38%
Bonds/Property Insurance		16,826	\$ 19,000	89%
Dues, Subscriptions, Publications	199	815	\$ 3,000	27%
Equipment Maintenance	116	1,108	\$ 5,000	22%
Office Supplies	424	7,416	\$ 3,000	247%
Postage	66	242	\$ 250	97%
Printing Services, Reproduction			\$ 1,000	0%
Rent	740	10,303	\$ 25,692	40%
Utilities	-	1,319	\$ 6,000	22%
Telephone, Computers & Internet	518	2,381	\$ 7,000	34%
Cleaning Service/MSW Disposal	-	225	\$ 2,000	11%
Travel & Conferences	610	1,881	\$ 8,000	24%
Miscellaneous	74	951	\$ 3,500	27%
Contingency (Moving net with interest income)	75	32,960	\$ 5,000	659%
<b>Overhead Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 4,502</b>	<b>\$ 83,577</b>	<b>\$ 107,442</b>	<b>78%</b>
Passthrough Expenditures (Contractual)	\$ 54,330	\$ 307,548	\$ 928,350	33%
<b>CAPITAL AND NON-RECURRING</b>				
Equipment (computers, furniture, hardware, etc)			\$ 6,341	0%
<b>Capital and Non-reoccurring Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 6,341</b>	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 105,434</b>	<b>\$ 656,193</b>	<b>\$ 2,043,086</b>	
<b>NET</b>	<b>\$ (98,108)</b>	<b>\$ 136,566</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	
<b>Bank Accounts-Balance 11/30/23</b>				
Certificate of Deposit #1-6996		48,173		
Certificate of Deposit #2-2036		48,495		
Certificate of Deposit #3-0783		61,093		
Certificate of Deposit NWCB		220,456		
STIF - NHCOG General Fund		381,308		
TSB Checking		450,933		
<b>Total Bank Accounts</b>		<b>1,210,458</b>		
<b>Statement of Cash Flows</b>				
<b>July - November, 2023</b>				
		<b>Total</b>		
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>				
Net Income		136,566		
Adjustments to reconcile Net Income to Net Cash provided by operations:				
Net change in accounts receivable		257,165		
Net change in accounts payable		(148,726)		
<b>Total Adjustments to reconcile Net Income to Net Cash provided by operations:</b>		<b>108,440</b>		
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>		<b>245,006</b>		
<b>Net cash increase for period</b>		<b>245,006</b>		
<b>Cash at beginning of period</b>		<b>965,452</b>		
<b>Cash at end of period</b>		<b>1,210,458</b>		