

Executive Committee Meeting Notes

Wednesday, July 1, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.

The Ridgefield Town Hall Annex 66 Prospect Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877

Meeting Started at 2:05 PM | Meeting Ended at 3:14 PM

Members Attending

Bethel	First Selectman Dan Carter
Darien	First Selectman Jon Zagrodzky
Redding	First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton
Ridgefield	First Selectman Rudy Marconi

WestCOG Staff: Executive Director Francis Pickering, Deputy Director Mike Towle, and Transportation Director Kristin Hadjstylianos.

COG/MPO Agenda Review

Francis Pickering presented the proposed content for the July COG/MPO Meeting Agenda.

Executive Updates

Francis Pickering provided an overview of the following executive updates:

Federal Rulemaking (OMB): Francis provided a summary of proposed language.

Housing Planning: Discussion on coordination with OPM and WestCOG's work related to the Regional Housing Growth Plan.

Personnel/Recruitment

Francis Pickering provided an update on a new staff member and the hiring process to fill a vacancy.

Program Updates

A discussion on the status of ongoing projects:

Transportation

RAISE (Western CT Trail Bicycle and Pedestrian Project) – A Project Advisory Committee meeting was held on June 11th. Consultants are working on planning phases and creating engagement material packages for the municipalities.

ENGLISH: For language assistance or other accommodations, contact Western Connecticut Council of Governments at least five business days prior to the meeting at help@westcog.org. ESPAÑOL: Para asistencia con el idioma y otras adaptaciones, por favor póngase en contacto con WestCOG por lo menos cinco días hábiles antes de la reunión al help@westcog.org. PORTUGUÊS: Para obter assistência língua ou outras acomodações, entre em contato com WestCOG pelo menos cinco dias úteis antes da reunião em help@westcog.org.

SS4A (Regional Safety Improvements) –Staff are working on updating procurement and solicitation documents. Coordinating with CTDOT on any overlap with statewide/regional projects.

Regional Transit Study –RFQ deadline has been extended to 7/13 and interviews are expected to take place in August.

Regional Freight Study – RFQ was released in June and the deadline is 7/15.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan – Staff are submitting project information CTDOT by July 1st to begin the air quality conformity modeling process. Staff will conduct engagement events this summer and fall.

Microgrants – WestCOG received one application this quarter and are coordinating with existing recipients on grant updates.

Regional Transportation Safety Plan – Staff are working on the High Injury Network and High Risk Network and preparing information for future municipal meetings.

TMA Certification Review – Received draft report and staff are reviewing the feedback.

Sherman Connectivity Study – Working on a draft of the existing conditions analysis and preparing for next Project Advisory Committee meeting.

Roundabout Study – Developing a screening analysis of intersections in the region to identify ideal locations for roundabouts.

Regional Planning

ADA Transition Plans – Consultant has continued municipal site visits, presentations, and reports for municipalities in Quad 3 and Quad 4. Work on track for completion by March 2027.

Parcel CAMA Updates. Ontrack. State funding to update parcel data and property information where communities can perform updates internally, contracted, or use WestCOG . Scheduled for completion by 12/31/2026 [Newtown] [Redding] [Bridgewater] [Brookfield]

Housing Growth Plan. Ontrack. Next Target is identifying developable lands (December 2026). Developing Regional Housing Growth Plans for municipalities to use (June 2029 Deadline).

Building Energy Management Data. Not Started. Will initiate upon hiring new staff member. Will identify energy-saving opportunities for municipal buildings. Funded with remaining EPA CPRG funds. The deadline of this grant project is June 2027.

WestCOG Office Cyber Security Improvement. Ontrack. Expected completion on November 30, 2026.

Brownfield Passthrough Grants: Ontrack. Currently working on three properties:

- Greenwich – Mason Street Partners developers (2 grants at \$4million each) WestCOG to begin the reimbursement process with developers and DECD,
- Stamford – Atlantic Street (\$950k for soil remediation),
- Stamford – Woodland Pacific (\$950k for soil remediation).

CT Tree Study. Starting. WestCOG is coordinating with CRCOG, OPM, DEEP, UConn, and Sustainable CT to assess tree management polices across the state and develop a canopy analysis to quantify benefits and plan targeted tree planting recommendations. Assessment of policies planned for September 2026. Tree Canopy Analysis planned for February 2027.

Police Tactical Training. Ontrack. WestCOG has received earmark funds to fund regional training equipment. This may manifest as virtual training equipment or as a transportable Firearms Training Unit. Next phase requires developing quotes for each of these. Deadline June 2027.

The Economic Plan. aka the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). WestCOG is looking to develop its Economic Plan for 2027 and has initiated the planning process. Deadline: January 2027

Legal Notice Cost Assessment. On Track. Developing an inventory of costs, legal notices, newspapers, and policy requirements along with an accompanying report of observations and recommendations. Deadline August 2026

Agriculture and Vacant Land Assessment. Coordination continues between WestCOG communities, UConn Extension, Land Trusts, and Farmers to identify municipal properties that could be temporarily used for agricultural purposes. Deadline September 2026.

Urban Forestry Peer Exchange. WestCOG is partnering with TNC to host a peer exchange of urban foresters in the WestCOG Region to share practices and showcase success stories.

Highlights ★

Branchville Sewer Study. Course Correction. Updated existing conditions and proposed development plans require the project to explore additional options for the study. Currently coordinating between Ridgefield, Redding, and the consultant. Project deadline of March 31st, 2027. [Redding] [Ridgefield].

Regional Local Fire Protection Plan Compliance Assistance. New Project. The purpose of the project is to assist participating municipalities in preparing the documentation, inventories, maps or geographic descriptions, and related materials needed to satisfy the municipal requirements of Section 1 of Public Act 26-144. Deadline: June 2027

Hazard Mitigation Plan. Expanding Scope. Additional funding available. for expanded planning. CT DEMHS is offering up to \$116,716 in HMP funds (requires 50/50 match). Expected for completion December 2026.

Climate Action Plan. Completed. Plan submitted. Prepared for COG Adoption. Awaiting completion of the CCAP playbooks. Remaining funds are available through 2027 to develop The deadline for the CCAP is June 2026.

POCD Climate Provisions. Completed on time. Available on WestCOG's website. Announcing to municipal staff. Municipalities updating their POCDs can use this content to reduce costs in their POCD updates.

Ongoing Services

WCEDD. Providing economic development support in grants, plan development, and WCEDD coordination. Next WCEDD Meeting is scheduled for October 9th. Looking at a refresh of members, inviting new ideas.

CEDS/Economic Plan development: Completed a regional SWOT at Aquarium in June. Summarizing feedback outcomes for plan/goals. Arranging municipal meetings for early fall to understand each communities needs ideas for CEDS development. Deadline: January 2027

Flood Assistance Program. Ongoing. Coordinating with Dewberry, municipalities, State, and homeowners. FEMA's BRIC grant is now available for municipal resilience projects.

Stormwater Service. Technical support navigating MS4 permit requirements. Staff coordinate with fellow COGs to develop education and training content as well. See stormwater infrastructure Mapping Effort for progress details on that effort.

Planner's Lunch. Next is Scheduled in July covering Resilient Improvement Districts and the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Grant Applications

DEEP Climate Resilience Fund (DCRF). AWARDED! Bringing to the COG for approval of funds to develop a feasibility study regarding Resilience Districts and Stormwater Utilities. Requested \$246,457, no match required.

FEMA's HMP Grant Program. AWARDED! A lower amount than requested of \$116,716.70. WestCOG is modifying the scope to reflect these changes and to align with previously performed resilience planning. The project requires a 25% Match (\$38,905.57).

CTDEEP Recreational Trails Grant Program – WestCOG resubmitted last year's application for the East-West Trail Study. Requested \$520,000 with a \$130,000 match (to be split by WestCOG and NVCOG).

EPA Community Wide Assessment Grant. NOT AWARDED. To establish a site assessment program to identify brownfields within WestCOG. Requesting \$500,000 with no match. COG approved application. WestCOG will follow up with EPA to improve for future applications.

EPA Community Wide Assessment Grant. Not Awarded. To establish a site assessment program to identify brownfields within WestCOG. Requested \$500,000 with no match. COG approved application. WestCOG will follow up with EPA to understand application result and next steps for next round application.

Upcoming meetings

TAG meeting: Wednesday, July 8, 2026 @11:00 AM

MPO/COG Meeting: Thursday, July 16, 2026 @12:00 PM

Executive Committee Meeting: Wednesday August 5, 2026 @2:00 PM